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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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Against Reading

WE have often complained in these columns that some people do not read enough, not so often, but with even greater bitterness, that many people read too much. Nothing so conduces to tranquillity, Montaigne observed, as getting rid of prejudices. But if the prejudices be against reserve and restraint in reading, the tranquillity that follows is the tranquillity of a goat or an ox. Where reading matter litters the streets and the eye falls upon printed words at every turn of the head, reading may become only a substitute for vacancy. A French critic has remarked that American books and magazines are made up disproportionately of "escape" literature which lifts the reader out of his drab immediacy into something or somewhere interesting. The description is too dignified for most of the reading that goes on, which is better defined as a bromide than as a stimulant. Such readers are not escaping from anything but the vacancy of their own minds. When their hands and feet stop their brains carry on like loose wheels down a highway of words. This is a verbal civilization, where everyone is articulate and listening is a vice.

One of the curiosities of literature historically speaking is the sporting page (now pages) of the newspapers. Never since the world began has there been such a shower of words. Padding reaches its limit here and excess in narrative and description can go no further. No battle of the past called forth such minutiæ of detail, such prognostications and post mortems, such exploitations of the personal habits of the least of the heroes, as does a third-class basketball team in a game which most of the readers will never see and all of the readers will quickly forget. The same paragraph will be written three times in three ways in the same column, and rumors about nothing in particular will be snatched out of nowhere by a hanging button and turned inside out and back again. Racy language has been developed by these writers, some of it excellent, but an important match of any kind is described at least twice in the first report and a half dozen times more in retrospect. Sports writing is a game itself where tireless writers work out new combinations and permutations of shop-worn counters; or it may be compared to a process by which bats, balls, oars, and fists are disintegrated into their atoms, each atom a word.

* * *

Why readers wish to read of sports is obvious. But why millions of readers read these incredibly diffuse millions of pages daily is a question to be answered. It is certain that many, if not most of them, have only a mild and abstract interest in the subject. If we were all such fans for everything as this volume of reading might imply, the United States would become one vast arena. The true answer is, that of all writing sports writing has (probably with purpose aforethought) the highest percentage of sheer vacuity and repetition, the heaviest charge of current fact that sounds interesting without the nuisance of being important. It is the nation's bromide—and like the popular bromides that chemists make, it has taste and bubble enough to attract. Such an endless discussion washed back and forth through Constantinople when the reds and blues were contesting in the Hippodrome; but now all the twists and turns and repetitions of idle talk are amplified by journalistic skill and broadcast in print.

If one asks why more good books are not sold and read, here is one answer. Bromide is by no means confined to the sporting pages, or indeed to the newspapers. Even readers with some intellectual and emotional curiosity get flabby after unrestrained reading, which ought to be rationed quantitatively and qualitatively both, especially in middle age when tastes have been formed and free places in the mind begin to grow scarcer. The once common, but now rare, practice of the private library was an excellent encourager of rationed reading. When a man speaks of his library now, you ask him what he is collecting, precisely as you ask a financier in what he is investing. But a library is essentially a selection and collection, not of rare books, and not of old or of new books, but of both, of books which one wanted to read, and having read, wanted to keep. There is a complete antithesis between the reading of a novel or biography bought to enjoy, remember, and keep, and the sporting pages.

And it may be added that more certainty of quality and less probability of bromide in the publishers' lists would help the private library idea. It is taste, habit, and opportunity, not the restrictions of apartment life that stand in the way. Books are the easiest of all commodities to stow away. By comparison with dogs, children, *chaises longues*, and Sunday newspapers they present no difficulty. Better a library on the floor than square yards of sporting pages on the dining room table.

O Earth!

By ELIZABETH COATSWORTH

O EARTH! give comfort to the creatures of earth
Who move on heavy feet across spring grass:
The little cats who once were swift to pass,
And cows who patient wait the ordained birth,
Mares in the meadows, foxes in the wood,
The great-eyed mice behind the wainscote wall,
Leaf-shadowed deer—have pity on us all
Bound each to each in life's strange sisterhood.
Grant to our weakness strength and fierce content
Who form the string by which life's bow is bent.

This Week

"Roosevelt: The Story of a Friendship."
Reviewed by JOHN CORBIN.
"King Mob."
Reviewed by ERNEST SUTHERLAND BATES.
"Twentieth Century Poetry."
Reviewed by ALFRED KREYMBORG.
"Visa to France."
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"It's Never Over."
Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT.
"Half-Breed."
Reviewed by THEODORE PURDY, JR.
"Antarctic Adventure."
Reviewed by EARL HANSON.
Interview with the Sphinx.
By LOUIS GINSBERG.
John Mistletoe, XI.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

Next Week, or Later

Virgil: His Temperament and His Art.
By E. K. RAND.

Roosevelt Luck Comes Back*

Reviewed by JOHN CORBIN

THOSE who remember what "Roosevelt luck" meant, remember also the later day when nothing which the once happy warrior hoped for and fought for could prosper. Even the weather man reversed his form, sending skies that unfailingly frowned on his public appearances. And so he continued throughout the long agony of the war. Most of us today, even those accustomed to remember and to reflect, see the glorious past through the medium of that clouded, frustrated vigil.

But among his great gifts was that of friendship—friendship with all sorts and conditions, including men of letters. Among these was one of the most virile thinkers and sensitive artists in words, who knew Roosevelt intimately from Harvard days until the last night closed in. Out of a vast store of memories, such as only the prehensile intuition of the novelist can register and evoke, and out of a file of hitherto unpublished letters equally vast, Owen Wister has limmed a portrait. It is not enough to say that Roosevelt laughs again, preaches again, and fights again in the aura of his old, invincible success. This artist and friend has the understanding and the skill to portray unflinchingly the Roosevelt he could not quite approve, who cried out distemperedly against a President too proud to fight and too pacific to prepare for the conflict clearly inevitable—even the Roosevelt he deeply disapproved, who demanded the recall of judicial decisions and rounded on the old comrade he had made President. And, while he makes one understand, he makes one love more wisely and not less well. Under the spell of Wister's touch, the Roosevelt luck has come back triumphant.

* * *

But was it altogether luck that gave Roosevelt the friendship of a man who could tell the better truth nobly? The scene of their first close encounters was the Porcellian Club at Harvard—"high-toned" as one used to say, which meant socially concentrated, rollicking, and perhaps a bit dissipated; but "it was literature in the main, and liking the same things and hating many of the same things, which brought the senior to take cordial notice of the sophomore." Even as an undergraduate, Roosevelt got on the nerves of the too high-toned. "Our discussions rose, certainly once, to a pitch which brought the door into the next room, where more silent ones were sitting, shut-to upon us with a slam of withering emphasis. No doubt about it, Roosevelt, eye-glasses and whiskers and an armful of notebooks clamped between elbow and ribs, would enter that atmosphere too breezily and hold forth too fluently, for the taste of Woodbury Kane and his like." This Kane "was born ironic and fastidious." "Many men in college had clothes as good as his, but he was always better dressed than anybody." His character had indeed, a "serious part," but he "mostly neglected his better self." He was "light in touch, bored by boisterous, eager, enthusiastic people with a purpose." But Roosevelt knew Kane too, and in good time gave him a chance to show his true quality as Captain in the Rough Riders. In 1902 Wister reminded Kane of that early distaste for his boisterously literary clubmate. "If he and I were crossing Brooklyn Bridge," said the once bored exquisite, "and he ordered me to jump over, I'd do it without asking why." Roosevelt was clubman and cowboy, soldier and statesman; but he was man of letters too, and would be far more widely

* ROOSEVELT: THE STORY OF A FRIENDSHIP. By OWEN WISTER. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1930. $4.

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known as such today, if he had not been so many things besides. And in every sphere he had the faculty not only of making friends but of serving them and keeping them.

The chapters that will endear this book to the general reader are those that tell of the intimate life in the White House during the seven Roosevelt years.

> Some of the successive families in that house may have resembled each other; none, I am perfectly sure, bore the slightest likeness to the Roosevelt family; nor, for that matter, could the guests of the other families even remotely have approached in their variety and their contrast the company drawn thither by Theodore Roosevelt's incessant lookout for merit in any worthy walk, and his instant impulse to give merit his emphatic recognition and encouragement.

Washington once remarked, apropos of the conduct of Jacky Custis, that he had learned to command an army but was helpless before one small boy. In Roosevelt's case the impossible was a small girl. "Why don't you look after Alice more?" a friend asked. "Listen," he said. "I can be President of the United States—or—I can attend to Alice." Once when the two men, pressed for time, were deep in a knotty problem of conservation, Alice blew in on them three several times on the most frivolous pretexts. "Alice," said her father, "the next time you come, I'll throw you out of the window."

Yet when mood and occasion served, the President himself could be equally gay and irresponsible. Having arrived early for luncheon, Wister and John Hay were in conversation, looking out of the window of the red room. The sound of soft steps behind them made them turn, and in the dim light they descried three forms in single file, bent at right angles from the waist and with outstretched palms wide open. "When they got close they stood upright. It was Roosevelt, and behind him Alice, and behind her a young foreign diplomat in uniform." Roosevelt explained that they considered the Oriental humility of their approach appropriate to such distinguished guests. On one occasion, when a diplomatic reception had dwindled to a champagne supper-party of familiars, Roosevelt moved from table to table among his guests. Coming to Wister and Peter Dunne, he laid his hands on their shoulders to prevent their rising and addressed them in a strong Irish accent:

> "I haven't time f'r to tell ye the wurruk Tiddy did in ar-hmin' an' equippin' himself, how he fed himself, how he steadied himself in battles an' encouraged himself with a few well-chosen worruds whin th' sky was darkest. Ye'll have to take a squint into the book ye'erself to l'arn thim things.
>
> "I won't do it," said Mr. Hennessy. "I think Tiddy Rosenfelt is all r-right an' if he wants to blow his horn lave him do it."
>
> "True f'r ye," said Mr. Dooley. . . . "But if I was him I'd call th' book 'Alone in Cubia'."

This, and much more of the same, Roosevelt recited with all his amazing brio and sense of fun; but the satirist's face flushed to purple. Under his victim's appreciative laughter, however, he recovered himself sufficiently to say, very gravely: "Do you know, Mr. President, the appearance of your cabinet is a great disappointment to me, *I don't believe one of them has ever killed a man.*"

Innumerable are the brief, telling portraits of memorable leaders who thronged the White House. In many cases, such as Henry Cabot Lodge and Oliver Wendell Holmes, they are of the highest value as a record and corrective for future historians. As to the later career of Gifford Pinchot, with whom Wister worked ardently for conservation, he says: "As I cannot speak well of it, I will not speak of it at all." With regard to Elihu Root's serving as chairman of the 1912 Convention at Chicago, he is perforce less reticent. He agrees heartily with Roosevelt that it was "a crooked convention." That it deserved an epithet no less damning is evident enough in the fact that in the following year the Republican leaders themselves effaced the rules of procedure which had enabled them to subvert the unmistakable will of the Party that Roosevelt be nominated. How sincerely Roosevelt believed that it was crooked is shown in the fact that, when the machine offered him the nomination in a last desperate effort to prevent a split, he refused it rather than ally himself with an organization so conscienceless—though he well knew that, with the old party divided, his candidacy had really no chance. This decision Wister cites as conclusive proof that Roosevelt's motive was not at all personal ambition but a sense of personal honor and public duty. Yet he gives full weight to Root's revulsion against the radical creed of the Progressives—which was, in fact, subversion of the basic principle of the Constitution; and he ends with this charming version of the old saying, *Heaven for climate, but Hell for company.* "Elihu Root will undoubtedly bring up in Heaven, but not, I fancy, until after a decent stay in Purgatory. When he comes there, it will make Purgatory much pleasanter for me." To Taft he is even more affectionate and forgiving; indeed, he makes one feel—somewhat paradoxically in view of his acceptance of the nomination—that true sympathy must go with him, however highly one may value the moral and patriotic element in Roosevelt's revolt.

That the fatal decision to reenter politics, in the New York campaign, after his return from Africa in 1910, was least of all the result of personal ambition, Wister makes abundantly evident. In London, Roosevelt had received the most alarming report of the crisis, from Gifford Pinchot; but on landing he declared and repeated that he intended to render only such service as was possible in private life. Nine days later at the Harvard Commencement, he sat on the platform with Governor Hughes; and Winthrop Chanler, observing from the floor the Governor's emphatic gestures, divined that he was urging the ex-President "to jump in and back the direct primary bill," and that Roosevelt had been persuaded. "He was the preacher militant perpetual," says Wister, "and to be in a fight for his beliefs was his true native element." No one who knew Roosevelt well can doubt this—though a question may linger whether, when the campaign was on, it was not the fight rather than the preaching which blinded him. Yet even so he was ill at ease. "This fight is very disagreeable," he wrote Lodge; "it is not the kind of fight into which an ex-President should be required to go." To Joseph Bucklin Bishop he wrote, in 1911, "As for the nomination (as President) I should regard it from my personal standpoint as little short of a calamity. . . . They have no business to ask me to take command of a ship simply because the ship is sinking." But, once in command, the spear of the preacher and fighter knew no brother. The result was a divided party, the election of Wilson, and his reëlection as war-time President. What that meant to the struggling nations of Europe, and to our own spirit, Wister indicates without dilating on it. He heartily praises Wilson's achievement of the Federal Reserve act, and he acknowledges that no Republican, not even Roosevelt, could have achieved the great triumph of the draft; he gives a temperately critical account of Wilson's dominant part in creating the League of Nations. Roosevelt's jocund rage and tragic frustration he portrays to the life. But for himself he is content to call Wilson "inscrutable."

* * *

Of the impartiality of Roosevelt's moral fervors, which was at once the source of his vast political strength with the whole people and of the enmity of extremists of all sorts, Wister presents a glowing picture. Wall Street laid the panic of 1907, which resulted from the San Francisco earthquake and the failure of the Knickerbocker Trust Company, to "the crazy man in the White House," while radicals of labor raged against his determination that their crimes be regarded as such—and both derided him as preacher of moral platitudes. At one of those family lunches at the White House, Alice laughingly accused the novelist of "bromides." The word was new to the President and was explained to him in a way that he appears to have taken personally. He tilted his head down at his plate, and it must have been half a minute before he muttered, "All the same, I have to use bromides in my business." Later, most of us came to think better of the mind to which the moral is more important than the phrase; and, indeed, no President has given us more phrases, especially of the kind that could *not* be quoted against him except by an obvious perversion. But at their best his phrases expressed a balanced duality which the American mind seems slow to comprehend. No maxim of diplomacy is sounder than, "Speak softly, but carry a big stick"—or more in the spirit of George Washington. Two phrases bespeak the very essence of the Constitution: "The door of the White House will be opened to the poor as soon as to the rich—but not one moment sooner!" and "We shall have done nothing if we merely set the greed of envy against the greed of arrogance, and thereby destroy the material well-being of all of us." Never since the great era of the Founders has a statesman felt so deeply or expressed so eloquently the spirit of all-inclusive justice and wisdom which is the soul of our Republic.

Very curious and disquieting, therefore, was his plumping for those nostrums of direct democracy, the initiative, the referendum, and the recall of judicial decision; and here Wister's presentation seems to fall short of completeness. When Roosevelt ultimately realized that this was the real reason why his old friends in the "crooked convention" of 1912 stood for the juggling of returns to prevent his nomination, he went as far in confession of error as he ever went. "I did it for my sins! The label did not describe the commodity; it was inaccurate and unlucky." And, "I had no business to take that position in the fashion that I did. A public man is to be condemned if he fails to make his point clear . . . and it was a blunder of some gravity not to do it." Mr. Wister surmises that "the hurricane put him into mental haste, deprived him not only of the leisure, but of the critical detachment with which he was in the habit of going over a public address beforehand, pruning down over-emphatic statements, and balancing one statement against another." But the record is rather against this. His argument was thoroughly documental. Repeatedly in his adresses he declared that the people should rule, citing a government "of the people, by the people, and for the people" as hallowed Republican doctrine. Looking back on it from this distance, and upon the evidence of his life as a whole, it is clear enough that as President he would not have transformed our government from a representative republic to a direct democracy—could not have done it even if he had been so inclined. But the legal-minded may be pardoned for taking him at his word—if not for straining the party power to defeat the party will. In all probability the stand was induced by what he so often called the "lunatic fringe" of his new and chaotic party, and by the rage of knock-down fight in which militancy for the moment overtopped sound preachment.

Seldom has the value of clear thinking been so vividly illustrated—even of sound grammar school instruction. Though he was a historian of great distinction and derided our earliest democrats, he does not seem to have realized that the doctrine for which he cited the authority of Lincoln derives from Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence, is diametrically opposed to the Constitution, and was deliberately repudiated as such by the Convention of 1787.

How much he came to realize of all this at the time of the War, it is impossible to say. There are reports among the intimates of his later years, that his illumination was complete; but in a matter so delicate and intricate little trust is to placed in the word of mouth. I well remember an occasion on which I said, using the term in its strict sense, that I did not believe in democracy. Instantly his face was clouded with shocked surprise at such a confession from an old Progressive; but into his eyes came a certain wistful look which Wister has described and very subtly psychologized—a look of hunting doubt as to the future of the American people which, ever since his Presidency, struggled half-submerged against his will to believe.

Only one other President has needed so deeply the pen of a friend who was also an artist, and the fate of John Adams was not destined to be thus illumined. Only one, that is, unless we include Woodrow Wilson. It is much that the great days from Cuba to the White House shine forever in the twice aureate years of an artist's friendship. It is more that the subsequent years of error and embittered frustration stand forth in the only light that can surpass this, the light of a fate which is character, the dusky splendor of high tragedy.

Apropos of recent discussion of the Bible as literature and as containing a philosophy of everyday life, *John O'London's Weekly* quotes the following list, entitled "A Row of Medicine Bottles," which was put forth many years ago:

"If you are doubtful or depressed read the 29th Psalm.

"If there is a chilly sensation about the heart, read the 3rd of Revelation.

"If you don't know where to look for the month's rent, read the 37th Psalm.

"If you feel lonesome and unprotected, read the 91st Psalm.

"If you find yourself losing confidence in men, read I. Corinthians xiii.

"If people pelt you with hard words, read the 15th chapter of John.

"If you are getting discouraged about your work, read the 126th Psalm and Galatians vi. 7-9.

"If you are all out of sorts, read the 12th chapter of Hebrews."

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The Mob Spirit*

KING MOB. By FRANK K. NOTCH. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1930. $2.

Reviewed by ERNEST SUTHERLAND BATES

THE author writing under the intriguing pseudonym of Frank K. Notch is, we are assured by the publishers, "an experienced writer." The experienced reader needs no testimony to this effect other than the author's own work. From the first to the last page "King Mob" reveals the deft hand of the literary craftsman. The fluent yet forceful style with its tempered wit and restrained denunciation—the style of a scholar who is also a man of the world—would alone suffice to give distinction to the book. Furthermore, the author possesses a high and austere taste and a keen-edged logic. He knows, one suspects, the classics intimately; he is well read in history and philosophy; if his knowledge of recent physics seems, like that of most of us, to be derived mainly from Eddington, he turns his Eddington to good account. He is very much alive, very alert.

The significance of "King Mob" lies in two things: first, in its attempt to derive the manifold evils of the present day—standardization, mass production, propaganda, inner emptiness and outer restlessness, nationalist hysteria—from one fundamental principle; and, second, in its endeavor to prove that what are usually considered to be efforts to remedy these evils are really only further examples of them. The fundamental principle is that modern civilization is controlled by the spirit of the mob which is defined as "a group of persons unable to think straight because they are affected by the consciousness of their own numbers." The modern mob, apparently, includes about nine-tenths of contemporary society. Its recent endeavors to "get" culture and the recent endeavors to "give" it culture threaten traditional human values with extinction. They ignore the very meaning of true culture which consists in inner development by means of discipline, the slow moulding of character by intense controlled experience. They try to seize as if it were a material thing a spiritual quality which must be wooed through a lifetime, not won in a day.

Catering to this tendency, according to Mr. Notch, are the Book Clubs, such publishers as Simon and Schuster, such popularizers as Durant and Van Loon. The public is constantly being panicked by the number of sales into an acceptance of mediocre work. There has developed an attitude for which only that is real which can be measured. In its attack on human personality the mob acts as a natural force. Nature knows nothing of spiritual values: she cares only for the species, not the individuals; her only standard is the mob standard of measurement. "The human impulse toward spiritual creation works in the teeth of a vast, crushing conspiracy which extends through every aspect of the physical universe." The mob has joined this conspiracy; "sport" is its analogue for the struggle to survive in nature.

Owing to the largeness of his field, Mr. Notch is forced to neglect many fair targets for his barbed arrows—our rotarianized colleges and churches, the pest of "conventions" which descend upon our cities like swarms of obscene insects, the fact that we cannot any longer produce even a man-sized individual criminal but merely the eternal "gang." Ignoring such trivialities, the author proceeds to the more important demonstration of the sinister influence of the mob spirit in fomenting race hatred and national wars. In the course of this demonstration he gives illuminating emphasis to the difference between indigenous local patriotism and the senseless modern cult of nationalism. He dispels the notion that scientific inventions offer any easy escape from nationalism. The increase of communication in recent times has served only, he argues, to produce a world mob which offers no security for world peace but in which all the characteristic evils of smaller groups are universalized. And yet, in the end, Mr. Notch strives manfully to avoid utter pessimism. While admitting his indebtedness to Spengler in tracing the decline of western civilization, he refuses to accept Spengler's conclusion. Spengler thinks we are hopeless and counsels resignation; Mr. Notch thinks we still have a fighting chance and counsels rebellion.

> Our civilization promises to make the question of a living easier and easier; and meanwhile living becomes emptier and emptier . . . Now that we can substitute the slavery of nature for the slavery of man, the art of living should spread among the many. Instead of that, we are deliberately forgetting it. A restoration of the art can begin only through the individual. We cannot serve humanity unless we make much of the man, and unless we rescue the individual we cannot help mankind . . . Machine, State, and Nation . . . must exist solely for the benefit of the individual.

However unsatisfactory the "humanist" dualism between man and nature which Mr. Notch adopts, however overdrawn the war which he depicts between the cultured few and the uncultured many, however captious his condemnation of particular writers and popularizing agencies—and his work invites criticism on all these counts—nevertheless, on the main issue "King Mob" strikes home. If Mr. Notch is weak in his analysis of causes, he is strong in his perception of aims. His program for "The Rescue of the Individual" is one to enlist the allegiance of every liberal.

* In connection with this review see the Open Letter on page 1148.

THE LONG, LONG TRAIL, by J. N. DARLING
From "Roosevelt: The Story of a Friendship."

Two More Anthologies

TWENTIETH-CENTURY POETRY. Edited by JOHN DRINKWATER, HENRY SEIDEL CANBY, and WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1930. $5.

A JUNIOR ANTHOLOGY OF WORLD POETRY. Edited by MARK VAN DOREN and GARIBALDI M. LAPOLLA. New York: Albert & Charles Boni. 1930.

Reviewed by ALFRED KREYMBORG
Author of "This Singing World"

IN "Twentieth-Century Poetry," an anthology of British and American poetry, the editors, John Drinkwater, Henry Seidel Canby, and William Rose Benét, have made an admirable contribution to a field already rich and almost over-ripe in anthologies. The many modern collections compiled during the past two decades have increased the labors of subsequent editors. They must sway an audience surfeited with anthologies, and produce new volumes, fresh in their viewpoint, content, and appeal. Happily, the twentieth century has introduced out of its own tumult, and carried over from the closing years of the nineteenth, a large body of excellent poets, varied and individual, and is now adding the adventures of the youngest generation. Furthermore, present-day editors have a clear advantage over their predecessors in the important matter of perspectives. Poets who have been overpraised and poets who have received a niggardly reception or none whatsoever are susceptible of balanced judgments on the part of critics and compilers. The wise editor, now more than ever, is an umpire who attempts fair play inside the boundaries of his temperament, and claims neither perfection nor finality for his selection and its prefaces and comments. His work, in any event, will be incomplete. His integrity will force him to state that his immense labors, concentrated between two boards, have made a mere sketch or outline of the poetic currents and movements of the century. It is thus with the present volume and its editors. They have approached their task with love, skill, and restraint—a little too much restraint in Mr. Drinkwater's case. The American editors have taken more chances and shown more catholicity than their British colleague.

The author of "Abraham Lincoln" is not inhospitable to experiment in poetry, and to the apparent waywardness of iconoclasts and pathbreakers. But he is cautious, very cautious, about admitting such explorers to the section over which he presides. Any anthology, it seems to me, should close with a few examples at least of the tendencies in poetry; and I feel the poetry of D. H. Lawrence to be more than a tendency. Other English absentees from the volume are Richard Aldington, F. S. Flint, and the parading Sitwells. Even if one dislikes such people, they were or are representative of definite phases in romance and experiment. It is needless to repeat that the movements we now term classical, were romantic in their time. But one cannot repeat too often that an editor should examine and re-examine his temperamental doubts even more than his preferences. Mr. Drinkwater, despite his experience and courtesy, has inherited the British habit of forcing a man to make good before he is completely acceptable. Often, all too often, the man has to die to make good. One does not ask a critic to be lenient with his contemporaries. But a little more daring and willingness to err should reside in his heart, though the heart lead his head astray.

Mr. Drinkwater's selection has been divided into four groups: "poets who have established themselves before 1900, but have continued to write in the new century"; poets too old or well known "to be eligible for Mr. Edward Marsh's Georgian anthologies"; poets who were included in those anthologies; and lastly, poets who have arisen since Mr. Marsh's scheme was completed. Part I opens with Hardy and closes with Yeats, and includes Bridges, Francis Thompson, Alice Meynell, Kipling, A. E. Housman, and A. E. Part II contains Michael Field, T. Sturge Moore, Doughty, Belloc, Chesterton, Masefield, and Noyes. The Georgian group, the largest of all, and the one contemporaneous with our national renascence, contains Davies, De la Mare, Hodgson, Abercrombie, Gibson, Drinkwater, Bottomley, Monro, the war poets, and Stephens, Freeman, and Gould. The last part contains but six poets: Charlotte Mew, Frances Cornford, J. Redwood Anderson, Humbert Wolfe, Charles Williams, Peter Quennell. Quennell is the only young poet in the British section. This delightful daredevil was born in 1905. In every instance but one (Charles Doughty), each poet is represented by two or more poems forming groups that give the reader an embryonic impression of individual gamuts. These gamuts are skilfully revealed by the editor and are introduced by pithy biographical and critical notes. Limitations of space hamper Mr. Drinkwater (as they hamper all anthologists) when it comes to the writers of epic verse and poetic drama. Doughty is limited to a scene from "Wayfaring to the Valley of the Dove," while such poetic dramatists as Hardy, Yeats, Masefield, Bottomley, and Flecker have to be confined to the lyric phases of their work. This is particularly regrettable in the case of Gordon Bottomley, whose exquisite dramas deserve a growing audience.

The American editors have divided their section into seven parts. The parts are not as arbitrarily arranged as the British section, nor does the arrangement enable the reader to study the subtle relationship among our poets in a natural order throughout. Adhering to a seven-part scheme, the editors might have divided our poets as follows: Forerunners of the national renascence, poets of the renascence (divided into two groups: the workers in the old forms, and the Imagists), poets of the Southern renascence, poets of the Western ballad, and poets of the younger generation (divided into two groups: the realists and the metaphysicians). These divisions are hinted at in the book, but the demarcations are not outlined with sufficient clarity. In Mr. Benét's fine foreword, it is stated: "Richard Hovey was, perhaps, the most salient poet before 1900, in which year he died." To Hovey's name might be added the name of the pioneer Stephen Crane, who likewise died in 1900, and most decidedly the name of Emily Dickinson. Though she died in 1886, the immortal tippler was discovered by and indubitably belongs to the present century, and might well have opened the second half of this volume.

The section opens, as it otherwise should, with William Vaughn Moody. Part I contains as well, Woodberry, Markham, Sterling, Torrence, and Miss Guiney, Miss Reese, Miss Branch. Part II contains Robinson, Frost, Sandburg, Lindsay, three of the Imagists, Eliot, Jeffers, and Sara Teasdale, Edna Millay, Elinor Wylie, Lola Ridge, Léonie Adams. Part III contains Leonard, Ficke, Oppenheim, Untermeyer, the elder Benét, Bacon, and Mrs. Con-

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kling—Part IV, Allen, Auslander, Stephen Benét, several humorists, and a group of the younger metaphysicians—Part V, Fletcher, Aiken, Bodenheim, Stevens, Williams, Cummings, Marianne Moore, Ransom, MacLeish, Hart Crane—Part VI, Neihardt and Sarett—Part VII, Edwin Ford Piper, two Southern ladies, and four negro poets. The book closes with James Weldon Johnson's "Go Down Death."

The American editors have been generous in their selection, a generosity tempered by critical insight and integrity. The prefatory notes to each poet's group are more elaborate than Mr. Drinkwater's. They are brilliantly written little essays, colorful, dynamic, stimulating. The volume's strongest appeal lies in the opportunity for enjoying and studying side by side the leading British and American poets of the century. It has been made very clear in Dr. Canby's general preface "that no estimate of the relative values of British and American poetry has been intended. . . ." This temptation has been silently left to the reader. I do not feel that a man is plunging into a competitive game and rooting for the home team when he ventures the opinion that recent British poetry is more traditional than American poetry, and American poetry more adventurous. This has become a truism.

It is more important to discover, for ourselves at least, that most of the American poetry in this volume could have been written nowhere else than on native soil.

Our poets of the nineteenth century, with the exception of Emerson, Whitman, and Dickinson, still leaned too heavily on English traditions. None the less, much though we pride ourselves on the great variety and originality of the poets of the national renascence, we owe the first steps in our indigenous march (and what profound steps they were!) to Emerson, and to the bearded Long Islander and mischievous girl who developed the Concordian's independent vision. We can now say with certainty that we have a tradition, though it is less than a century old. This anthology, revealing definite contrasts between cousins who speak and write what used to be considered an identical language, proves that we are an autochthonous race, with ideals and records of our own, a past and future of our own. If it had no other quality, the book would still be worthy of recommendation to British, as well as to American readers. But, all argument aside, it is of still greater value to the lover of poetry, regardless of race or tradition. The book is full of beautiful things which one reads for themselves alone. . . .

Of Mr. Mark Van Doren's "Junior Anthology of World Poetry" little can be added to what has been said about its predecessor. The first volume is vastly popular, and doubtless deservedly so. The Junior Anthology was compiled at the suggestion of Mr. Garibaldi M. Lapolla, of the Thomas Jefferson High School. Mr. Lapolla states that the book "is offered to the ever-growing numbers of children who have in recent years been learning to enjoy the reading of poetry without the mediation of teacher or parent." What a long, long step in advance over one's own boyhood, when poetry, literally forced down the throat, was an absolute abomination! The progress from education to self-education is a healthful indication of growth where growth is most needed. I happen to know from many jaunts about our queer soil how responsive the young are to poetry—providing you let them enjoy it. Only last night, a quiet little human, in his first year at high school, gravely informed me that his four favorite poets are Robinson, Aiken, Fletcher and—well, this could not have happened when I entered high school a little over thirty years ago. In those days, we hated poetry like hell!

Commenting editorially on Robert Bridges the London *Mercury* says: "His perpetual youth of heart and mind was almost unique. What is not so generally known is that this went with a tremendous robustness of character and tremendous physical vigor. Since his death Dr. Bourne has revealed to the world that Bridges was asked, in 1867, if he would stroke the Oxford Boat: and declined, probably without a moment of subsequent regret, on the ground that he was working hard for his Schools, and that his College Boat must consequently content him. At seventy he was drilling with the Oxford Volunteers. At seventy-six he was still capable of walking his thirty miles over rough country, and probably of taking any of his critics by the scruff of the neck and dropping him into the Thames."

A Gay Novel

VISA TO FRANCE. By Berry Fleming. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by Gladys Graham

ALONG time ago, before Miss Gertrude Stein had descended into her present repetitional obscurity of style, but after she had definitely turned her back on the brief clarity of "Three Lives," she wrote a story about two young women,—Harriet Freen and Georgine Skeen. The essential fact about these two young women, which grew during the story from a mere statement into a refrain, was that they were both "regularly gay." And so it is with "Visa to France." It is a gay book, a regularly gay book, without at all being another of the numerous and depressing "funny" books that appear each year as surely as the vacation season does. This story of the Riviera is based firmly upon the actualities of the lives of its characters and not upon the considered needs of the possible reader; the ironic cross-currents and contradictions which so flavor it, spring from the intrinsic conflicts of human nature and not from an obvious juggling of events and characters for the purpose of entertainment. Mr. Fleming has looked upon his hero, and has pleasantly recorded his findings for us.

Clement Train arrives at Les Planches-sur-Mer typically. He is driving a conspicuous automobile nicely stocked with a servant and with wines bearing the proper marks and the proper years. And he is wearing yellow gloves for which he has paid one hundred and ninety francs *chez* Jones "as a homage to convention," and which he has conscientiously made very dirty, "as a homage to romance." He is an American who has come to the French *plage* looking for a plot for a novel. Here, surrounded by the most complex situations, in daily contact with expatriates of England, Germany, Italy, and America, and with plots beating in upon him with the regularity of the waves along the shore, he spends his days trying vainly to find the person who will make the central character for his story and in the end gives up in irritable futility because he sees no stuff that plots are made on.

This basic irony of a plotless author entirely surrounded by plots gives the undercurrent tone to the whole novel, but the stories within the story, the strange, the amusing, and the tragic little contest that Train misses entirely, might very well stand on their own merits, unaccountable to any central scheme. Mr. Fleming has not gone in for the shocking or the merely reportorial presentation of life in the French "American Bars." He has constructed a novel, created character, and most engagingly commented on life. "Visa to France" doesn't take itself too hard but it should be very gratefully received by a public which does not often get a book of such gay intent so beautifully turned out.

Crime and Catastrophe

IT'S NEVER OVER. By Morley Callaghan. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by Basil Davenport

MR. CALLAGHAN, who has been known as a writer of effective, extremely simple *contes*, has turned to a story in which the psychology is complex and subtle to the point of obscurity. His story begins with the execution of Fred Thompson for the killing of a policeman in a brawl, and deals with the effect of his disgrace and death upon a small group of his intimates;—John Hughes, his friend, Isabelle, his sister, and Lillian, a girl who had once been in love with him, but who was, even before his crime, transferring her affections to John. Of these, Isabelle is the only one who is a force in the story; the other two she does with almost as she pleases. In spite of the fact that Fred's crime had every extenuation possible, Isabelle feels herself hopelessly disgraced, and finds her only consolation in dragging her friends and his into disgrace as well. She succeeds in getting John and Lillian to live together before they can afford to marry, and then when they have reconciled themselves to the scandal and are working out a way of living, she sets out to possess herself of John's body, for no better reason than to get rid of her own chastity and spoil his happiness and Lillian's at a blow.

This is only a part of the story; there are other characters to be involved in catastrophe, there are eddies and cross-currents of emotion and motive, but this is enough to show that if Isabelle is to be made comprehensible, she must have the most careful and delicate analysis. She receives almost none. Mr. Callaghan tells this intricate story of neurotics in the same manner as his earlier tales of prize fighters, with an entirely external viewpoint and a studied evenness of tone and lowness of key. In "Soldier Harmon" (to take an example which will be remembered as one of the best short stories of the year) this treatment gave poignancy to the simple, straightforward hero, and heightened the pathos by deliberate understatement; in "It's Never Over" it is simply baffling. At first the monotony of sentence structure and careful avoidance of climax have a hypnotic effect, disposing the reader to believe what is related in so matter-of-fact a manner, but before long one grows incredulous in spite of oneself. Mr. Callaghan's style, too, grows positively painful in the longer form. He has apparently imitated the superficial characteristics of Mr. Hemingway's style, the short, simple declarative sentences, generally beginning with the subject, but he has missed the delicate internal modulations (as noteworthy as Milton's variations on the iambic pentameter) with which Mr. Hemingway varies his style.

Nevertheless, though one must call "It's Never Over" a failure, it is the kind of book that shows its author an artist, one who would rather fail at first in a new attempt than repeat an old success. This book has the qualities which won praise for its author's earlier works, their vitality, closeness of observation, and clarity of expression. It fails because its conception is so much beyond anything Mr. Callaghan has attempted in his previous stories that their form will not hold it. His reach conspicuously exceeds his grasp, but that reach shows him of a higher stature than last year.

Riel's Rebellion

THE HALF-BREED. By Maurice Constantin-Weyer. New York: The Macaulay Co. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by Theodore Purdy, Jr.

THE minor and undress episode in Canadian history which is known as Riel's rebellion passed almost unnoticed in the United States, still involved in 1869 in the shadows of the Civil War. Yet in some ways the story of this revolt of a few hundred half-breed French-Indians in the region now known as Manitoba is well worth retelling, and M. Constantin-Weyer's vigorous and picturesque version of it makes, in the main, excellent reading. Not always scrupulous in regard to historic verisimilitude, the author is nevertheless able to present a sufficiently accurate picture of his hero and his surroundings. Louis Riel was clearly a remarkable man, with great personal qualities as leader of his fellow men, yet through the force of circumstances his revolt took on something of a comic opera character, and its final suppression largely by the efforts of a man less admirable but more adequately supported, was no doubt inevitable. The methods of M. Constantin-Weyer, who was the winner of last year's *Prix Goncourt*, are nowhere better shown than in his vivid description of how D. A. Smith (later Lord Strathcona) with the aid of a little whisky and some persuasion put down the rebellion single-handed. The tragedy came later still, when Riel, who had returned to Canada after some years in exile, was captured and hanged at Regina in 1885.

The book is an unusual and interesting one, especially coming as it does from a Frenchman who has wandered far afield in the search for material, and, in this case at least, brought home something worth having. The style is also exceptional, recalling Kipling rather than Gallic models and yet succeeding in avoiding the customary clichés of most romances of the Northwest.

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Four Polar Books

ANTARCTIC ADVENTURES AND RESEARCH. By GRIFFITH TAYLOR. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1930. $2.

THE WORST JOURNEY IN THE WORLD. By APSLEY CHERRY-GARRARD. New York: The Dial Press. 1930. $5.

THE LAST CONTINENT OF ADVENTURE. By WALTER B. HAYWARD. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1930. $3.

HEROES OF THE FARTHEST NORTH AND FARTHEST SOUTH. By J. KENNEDY MACLEAN and CHELSEA FRASER. Revised Edition. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co. 1930.

Reviewed by EARL HANSON

WITH our present furore over polar exploration has come a flood of books on the subject, of which the four volumes here under consideration represent an excellent cross section, from the best to the worst.

We have read so much romantic ballyhoo about this form of human endeavor, tending to cloud the real issues at stake and to remove all semblance of purpose and tangible values, we have been so overwhelmed by the terms "intrepid,—gallant,—modest," and by descriptions of the terrible difficulties to be overcome by explorers, that a good many of us are somewhat at a loss as to "what it's all about."

Those who really want to know had better turn to Griffith Taylor's book on "Antarctic Adventure and Research."

Taylor, who was geologist on Scott's last expedition, is a scientist first and foremost, with a scientist's attitude toward exploration and a scientist's uncompromising demand that heroism and thrills must bring tangible results in the form of new knowledge. His book is a valuable reference work for teachers, writers, editors, exploration fans, and all others who are interested in real values and in keeping their feet on the ground. It is not adapted to the purpose of those who read only for the thrill of the moment.

After a highly interesting chapter on the value of Antarctic exploration, Taylor plunges into a condensed history of the movement, from 1739 to the present day, through Wilkins and Byrd and Mawson's last venture, always stressing what each man contributed to our present knowledge of Antarctica, less concerned with his human qualities. About Amundsen's south polar venture he says, for instance, that "as a scientific journey—it was largely a waste of time—." This in contrast to the great scientific results of Scott's last expedition.

Quite right, in spite of the Norwegian's great superiority over Scott in matters of technique and experience. The ideal explorer is one who combines Amundsen's skill as a commanding traveler with Scott's scientific curiosity.

Taylor's short but illuminating sections on Wilkins and Byrd should be read by all who are the least bit bewildered by recent newspaper accounts. The seven chapters comprising the rest of the book are devoted to semi-technical accounts of Antarctic geography, climate, geology, flora and fauna, etc. They are tightly packed and extremely informative, but are entertaining only to those who do not shy at real, solid facts. As a handbook on Antarctic exploration it stands at the top,—on a par with the splendid recent publications of the American Geographical Society.

* * *

With Taylor on the Scott expedition was Apsley Cherry-Garrard, whose book "The Worst Journey in the World" is now republished in a single volume. This record of the entire expedition has long been regarded as a classic, and in many respects it undoubtedly is. It justifies its title. I know of no book that paints such a terrifying picture of polar conditions, of awful hardships borne with almost superhuman fortitude and gallantry. The winter journey that the author made with Wilson and Bowers, in search of the eggs of the emperor penguin that were so badly needed by science, well deserves the title it received in the scientific report on these eggs,—"The worst journey in the world in the interest of science."

Winter anywhere in Antarctica is no picnic time, and the admiration of the world must go out to these men, whose clothes were frozen so stiff, day after day, that they couldn't move their heads between the hours of arising in the morning and the time they labored to crawl into their stiffly frozen sleeping bags at night. Toward their hardships they displayed an unsurpassed heroism and cheerfulness, and as a literary record of how men were tantalized by death for weeks and months at a stretch, Cherry-Garrard's book has few equals. It has its other side, however, and in justice to the whole cause of exploration that must be pointed out.

The author seems convinced that the Scott expedition's methods and equipment were the best possible,—hence all its hardships are blamed on polar exploration in general, which he calls "at once the cleanest and most isolated way of having a bad time that has yet been devised." He even forgets his sense of sportsmanship long enough to write: "There are those who write of polar exploration as though the whole thing was as easy as possible. They are trusting, I suspect, in a public who will say, 'What a fine fellow this is! we know what horrors he has endured, yet see how little he makes of all his difficulties and hardships.' "

That seems to me such a rotten statement that I cannot refrain from being a bit ill-natured myself. Could it not be possible that some explorers *did* have an easy time? Many expeditions had no scurvy, and there were many explorers who did not allow themselves to freeze into their clothes.

Cherry-Garrard sweepingly calls polar exploration "the only form of adventure in which you put on your clothes at Michaelmas and keep them on until Christmas—" probably not at all aware that here lay the cause of many of his troubles. Any Eskimo who took such means of inviting the hoarfrost to form and his clothes to freeze stiff would be accused by his fellows of insanity and not applauded for heroism. John Rae did not do that. Stefansson didn't. Wilkins didn't. It was for just such reasons that these men failed to suffer as Scott and Cherry-Garrard did, and it takes a perverted sense of gallantry to suspect them openly of charlatanism.

As a literary record "The Worst Journey in the World" is a fine, thrilling job. As a handbook on exploration I cannot subscribe to its greatness.

Several popular accounts of polar exploration have recently been published, written by laymen who gathered their facts from books and scientific records. The two here under consideration represent both the best and the worst I have seen of that form of endeavor.

* * *

Walter B. Hayward's "The Last Continent of Adventure" is an excellent job, written not only entertainingly and well, but with no small amount of critical judgment and human understanding. Hayward displays a fine knowledge of the widely varying aims of those who figured in the history of Antarctic exploration. Unlike most popular writers he gives full due to men like Wilkins and Mawson, who did their wonderful work without an avalanche of newspaper publicity. His understanding of Byrd's work, in revolutionizing the technique of polar exploration as well as in gaining actual results in the field, reaches far beyond the usual sentimental poppycock about the intrepid dash to the pole.

We need much more of that kind of writing, and while "The Last Continent of Adventure" does not pretend to be a full history of Antarctic exploration, it is nevertheless the best thing of its kind I know of,—always barring, of course, Hugh Mill's "The Siege of the South Pole," which only goes as far as 1905.

I wish I could say the same of "Heroes of the Farthest North and Farthest South." Here we have that sad spectacle of a "historian" with a good many facts on hand,—though not quite enough,—and with apparently no critical judgment whatever. In the introduction, signed "J. W. M.", we read that "while Byrd—has been flying in the Antartic, Wilkins has also sought to try his wings in the South. Who knows?—the next edition of our book may chronicle his conquest of the Antarctic by air also." That for the man whose Graham Land flight is not only the first, but also the most dangerous flight ever made in the far south,—and was more productive of concrete geographical results than any of Byrd's.

Later we read more of the same nonsense,—that Wilkins' arctic flight of 1927 was a failure,—that he flew over the pole on his journey to Spitsbergen, that he may some day fly to the South Pole, etc.—all without the slightest indication that the author knows what the Australian is trying to do or what he has already accomplished.

MacLean's book is ostensibly a history of polar exploration, beginning with the days of King Arthur and forgetting about such men as Pytheas. Yet it says nothing, for instance, of the fact that the Greely expedition went north for the purpose of establishing one of those international transpolar meteorological stations that did so much to advance our arctic knowledge in the 'eighties. It mentions that expedition's record of "farthest north," but says nothing of its main job, the winter work, except that the men published a paper for their amusement. That makes the whole business seem rather childish.

"Farthest north" seems to be a criterion of achievement, and even MacMillan, not to be outdone in this respect, sets a world's record "for a vessel of only fifteen tons register." And while a long section is given to MacMillan, no mention whatever is made of Sir Douglas Mawson's tremendously important work in the far south. A laudatory chapter is given to Stefansson, but the real greatness of that man's work, in proving that there is life in the arctic ocean and in developing a brand-new technique of polar travel, is missed entirely.

The author's geographical lore, also, seems gleaned only from other "popular accounts." He speaks for instance of the "intense darkness" of the winter night, though he himself must often have noticed how light it is when the moon and the stars shine on a snowy landscape, and should be able to imagine how much lighter yet the aurora would make it.

That kind of stuff may be entertaining, but I see no value whatever in perpetuating misinformation or cheap standards of achievement. The records of Nansen and Stefansson, Wilkins and Byrd deserve more than that.

Interview with the Sphinx

By LOUIS GINSBERG

HERE I have come across the world to view
Your Gorgon-gaze, before which mankind shrinks.
Gigantic, crouching, God-like monster, you,
Listen to me, listen to me, O Sphinx!

The secrets of the world roost on your brow,
Aloof enigma, loitering by the Nile!
Relax your stony scorn. Have pity. How
You bait the soul of man with your slow smile!

Hear me, O Sphinx, who tower so terribly strong:
Release the riddle coffined in my shoddy,
Perverse, and stubborn flesh! (My soul too long
Has rusted in the scabbard of my body!)

Hear what I say, O Sphinx: can you not see
I cannot dig them forth, how much I try,
Those questions that are live coals deep in me,—
Those burning live coals of *How* and *Whence* and *Why?*

To you, whose massive calm has doomed man's rest;
To you, whose scorn here wars with Time, I call—
Tell me what wisdom in this world is best:
What is the greatest happiness of all?

(Or are you but a phantasy—a whim?
Unfathomable form, is this your gaze
Only the same reflected heart of him
Who, like Narcissus, peers in his pool of days?)

Then as I stared, a blinding flash of lightning
Enrobed the Sphinx, transfiguring its form!
And in the blaze of that revealing brightening,
The Sphinx swarmed into life! It was a storm

Of atoms whirling in a million courses;
A hurricane of atoms seethed and fought,
Each pulling each, so that this maze of forces,
This hurricane was cancelled into naught!

A myriad contradictions I could see,—
A myriad conflicts in the Sphinx had come
Poised to a lofty immobility—
Locked to triumphant equilibrium!
The Sphinx balanced contraries to an immense,
Desireless calm: to loss of self, it owes
All its enormous, proud indifference,—
Its colossal and implacable repose!

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The Bowling Green

John Mistletoe XI.

THERE were three, the Mathematician, the Scandinavian, and young Mistletoe. April was coming in, and they grew weary of the garrets in the rue de la Sorbonne. It had been amusing, even the squalor and the six spirals of corkscrew stairway, the incredibly primitive sanitation and the cooking for themselves. For reasons of romance as well as thrift they insisted on doing their own cuisine, and lived mostly on cocoa, lentils, and porridge. In those days they needed no raw whiskey to make them sing. They sang in the attics, they had one specially lewd and tuneful ditty in which they contrived a gruesome harmony. Scandinavia had a sweet rather thin tenor, Mistletoe could manage a moderate barytone, Mathematics mumbled on an asymptote. It must have been terrible. Even the bearded *patron*, far below, could not endure it. He used to stand at the bottom of the staircase well and scream, "Il ne faut pas chanter comme ça."

But April sunlight began to warm the roofs. Cocottes were leaning out of the courtyard windows washing their hair. Through the thin partitions of adjoining garrets came creakings and ejaculations which were troublesome to youths of spirit. In the little sixth floor corridor the deplorable concierge was discovered misusing the sink where they washed their dishes. They fled to the Forest—yes, the Forest of Fontainebleau.

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I should have gone back a little earlier, to the Quai Chanzy, Boulogne, where he first set foot in France. That was the way to arrive, not in a big liner with a mob of prosperous tourists, but in a little cargo steamer that sailed from London Bridge at 1 A. M. It was a brilliant spring afternoon on the Quai Chanzy, and as Mistletoe and Mathematics toted their portmanteaux along the railway siding Mistletoe heard his first French words uttered in their own air. It was a bearded stevedore, a frail and meagre creature (he looked rather like Francis Thompson) who cried out in a sing-song voice "Ce n'est pas la même chose." I can hear him still. Mathematics had been in France before, but his communicative resources were very small. They had several hours to ramble Boulogne before catching the Paris train, and lunched in an agreeable café. Mathematics, a fanatical lover of cocoa, wanted more of it and kept crying to the waiter "Plus de chocolat!" The more he reiterated this unintentional negation, the more the waiter tried to assure him that the chocolate was not compulsory. But Mistletoe's simplicity was not far behind. Rattling toward Paris on the wooden benches of a 3rd-class railway carriage he studied a newspaper. He was somewhat staggered by the number of advertisements of Sages-Femmes, and wondered why France should need so many fortune-tellers, for so he construed them.

Any way of getting to France is a good way, but you will forgive a special affection for that method of sneaking up on her when she didn't know or care whether they were coming. How much, in that spring of 1912, was still in the future; how much always is.

But the scholarly Scandinavian had been living in the rue de la Sorbonne all winter, and was emaciated by hard work and his own cooking. He had discovered that life can be very economically protracted on lentils; by these nourishing but monotonous legumes and the works of the Norse novelist Kielland the energies of his life were recruited. He needed ventilation, and the other two took him off to Fontainebleau.

Not Fontainebleau itself, but to the yonder outskirts of that forest region, to the Moret-sur-Loing. I suppose the little main street of Moret, running from one fortified gate to the other, is still the same. Near the western gate, on the right-hand side as you enter the town, was a modest auberge famed for artistic villégiature, where they lunched and dined at the table d'hôte and admired the panels decorated by generations of visiting painters. They bedded in clean, airy but very chill chambers above a laundry, alongside the river. There, at night, trying to keep warm, they pursued their various studies. Mathematics was probably the most conscientious. In his excelsior trudge upon higher rationality he was approaching the vegetation-line. After breaking through the thick forests of algebras and calculus he was beginning to reach those tilted blueberry pastures from which the mathematician gets the broadest and purest view known to the human mind. In spite of a waistcoat lined with flannel he was not warm, but his mind was at ease. Mistletoe, supposedly studying Constitutional History, was neglecting Bishop Stubbs's *Charters* for the songs of Charles d'Orléans, Villon, and Ronsard. *Le temps a laissé son monteau, said Charles of Orléans, de vent, de froidure et de pluie, et s'est vêtu de broderie, de soleil rayant, clair et beau.* It sounded warm and jolly, but the attic of the *blanchisseuse* where he tried to translate it in its own meter was cold enough to numb the fingers. The meadows along the Loing were white with fruit-blossoms, which might almost have been snow to judge by temperature.

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But it was the problem of Scandinavia that gave the other two most amazement. What do the novels of Kielland deal with, that they have so lively effect on the mind? Or was it just release from a long winter in a Paris garret that aroused the mystic Norseman? He decided, first, that his system required fasting; so while the two M's went daily for their hearty viands and white wine at the auberge, the Scandinavian lived on lemon juice and water. Also the gymnosophist that lurks in every Norseman came out and flourished. To escape the chill of their lodgings these boys set off with rugs and books, every fine morning, to a southward-looking lair on the edge of the forest. Arrived there, Scandinavia would strip to his boots, perform a smart routine of setting-up exercise, and then run with fervor along the woodland aisles. That heavenly forest is criss-crossed with grassy paths and alleys, and far down the perspective of these green avenues his anxious companions would see the naked mystic twinkle in a beam of sun. So he would run, singing Norwegian melodies darting into underbrush if a stranger hove in sight, and startling an occasional woodsman by a flash of his brilliant Scandinavian whiteness. In the ecstacy of this new freedom he laughed to himself continually, particularly when pursued for miles by an excited painter from Barbizon who caught a distant glimpse of that slendor flitting pallor and toiled after him with paintbox and easel hoping to transfer it to canvas. Legends that still exist in Barbizon about the White Virgin of Moret, supposed to haunt those forest glades, date back to the Gymnosophist of Stavanger.

Meanwhile Mathematics and Mistletoe, whose wilder sensibilities were allayed by plentiful food and wine, lay on their rugs beneath the walnut tree and did not know what trouble was. Of Bishop Stubbs's collected Charters, those really fascinating documents, the one that seemed there to have most reality was the Forest Charter of Henry III. Surrounded by the green temptation of that old royal domain one could discern some meaning in the severity of the ancient forest laws. Boscage and pannage, venison and vert, began to make sense. There was a pleasure in reading old Henry's concessions to those of high degree:—

> Quicunque archiepiscopus, episcopus, comes vel baro transierit per forestam nostram, liceat ei capere unam vel duas bestias . . . sin autem faciat cornari, ne videatur furtive hoc facere.

"Any archbishop, bishop, count or baron who shall pass through our forest is permitted to take one or two head of game . . . provided a horn is blown, so that it shall not seem to be done furtively." They could find no clause suggesting that a mystic might run naked in those woods, but at any rate there was nothing furtive about it. They amused themselves by wondering which provision of Henry III's Forest Charter they might appeal to for Scandinavia's defence in case he were run in by the local magistrate. The real difficulty would have been in supporting the argument that Henry III had a valid claim to the throne of France as well as England. The most reasonable defence would have been the claim that their mystic friend was constructively regarded as a domestic animal, for there was a clause allowing free men to take their domestic animals for an airing in the forests of the king.

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That sunny forest-edge, looking over clouds of white fruit-petals and the meadows of the Loing—they bathed there once, but only once, for it was icy—seemed a long way from the great turnings of the world. Yet a little sketch still kept of the river-gate at Moret was drawn by a man who was blown to pieces by a shell five years later; and Mistletoe's last drowse under that walnut tree was broken by darkness. It was a fortnight since those young arcadians had seen a newspaper. That morning Mathematics had a strange impulse to walk over to Veneux-Nadon for a journal. The other two were basking on their rugs, listening to the hum of insects when their friend came back with bad news in his face. He threw down the paper and they read of the *Titanic*.

That horror connects in memory with a trivial but curious adventure in Paris the next day. Mistletoe was on the way to Devonshire, and had several hours in Paris. In a barber shop a bad five-franc piece was given him; it had a hole in it which had been plugged with tinfoil. It was an economic necessity to get some service out of the coin: he spent more than he could afford in various shopping to try to pass it. It was always refused in spite of his best stratagems. Discouraged he sat at last on a café terrasse for a humble glass of beer, and then learned that there was to be an eclipse of the Sun. Sure enough, the full beam of April brightness was already growing dim. It was an extraordinary sight, in the midday career of Paris traffic. Life paused, the very taxis stopped in mid-street to watch. The ingenious youth saw his opportunity, and hastily ordered another beer and a sandwich. He ate and drank fast; in the very corona of the eclipse he fled, leaving the imperfect coin as payment, and caught the train for Havre in the penumbra. It was his only triumph over European coinages, and it took the whole solar system to make it possible.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

A Fantasy by Salten

THE HOUND OF FLORENCE. By FELIX SALTEN. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by HENRY WALCOTT BOYNTON

FELIX SALTEN'S "Bambi" first gave him to American readers. It was simple as a child's tale, carved like a statue, lucent with imagination and feeling. An "animal story" on the surface but also a parable of all life, its pain, its ecstasy, its slow fulfilment and surcease. It might naturally be taken as the work of some young poet, wistfully. seeking beauty in common things.

Compared with "Bambi," "The Hound of Florence" is a minor product, more ingenious, more a contrivance, a boy-into-dog fantasy in a Renaissance setting. The hero is son of a Florentine artist exiled in Vienna. The boy grows up with an ardent love of beauty and a still more burning desire for the Florence of his blood and dream. His father's death leaves him without means to live, or to make the long road southward. He sees passing the train of a dissolute young Archduke, bound for Florence. Leaping beside the ducal coach is a Russian hound; and the boy passionately envies the animal, and cries that if he could be himself half the time, he would gladly be that dog, heading for beloved Florence.

Now he chances to be touching a magic talisman at the moment, and his wish is fulfilled. With the sensation of a sharp blow, he finds himself running beside the Archduke's coach: so begins his strange journey. At last he reaches Florence, contriving by great effort to achieve his first vision of it with human eyes.

There his nature expands, he finds a master to whose vision his genius is patent. He labors hard while he may, but still half his time must be passed in the body of a dog. So long as the Archduke stays in Florence, there is no escape for Lucas the artist and the lover. For now in the person of Claudia the lovely courtesan, youthful passion has taken him captive and she for the first time feels the power of disinterested love. So the tale marches to its strange and fearful moment of climax, when the fates of dog and man appear to be so hopelessly confounded and determined, yet when nothing is certainly at an end except the man's slavery to the unholy spell.

Apart from—no, bound up in the romantic tale is the vivid picture of an Italy, a Florence, still vital with the creative passion of the Renaissance, abounding in all virtue but that of the moralists.

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BOOKS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Ask the Woman

THIS UGLY CIVILIZATION. By RALPH BORSODI. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1929. $3.

Reviewed by R. G. TUGWELL
Columbia University

IF, says Mr. Borsodi, you will take yourself to the country and reëstablish the homestead, you can have Utopia here and now; you will not have to try to remake the world, for if enough of us merely set up our own establishments in this way, the world will then be remade. There are no sacrifices involved, except of things and activities we most of us think meretricious anyway. There is everything to gain, from the recovery of lost companionship between men and women who have a common task, to the renewal of the joys of sound appetites and healthy bodies which will come from tending gardens and making honest flour.

It is a pleasant picture to most Americans, this establishment. There is a wide-shouldered house, surrounded by edible and fragrant growing things; there are, perhaps hills to rest the eyes; and there is a slow rhythm of natural successions, day and season and year, turning toward a ripe and fruitful age. There is a place to put down roots; people and animals, to care deeply and permanently about; things accustomed, to gather the patina natural to their age. It is pleasant to Americans because we had it once, and because there is—no use talking—a lively nostalgia for all that still surviving in us. Somehow it has all been lost. We hardly know how, because we never willed it, because it happened in spite of us. Then, too, the prospective delights of having it back are multiplied by the assurance that we can have there most of the things we have come to depend on. The old farmstead had no furnaces or bathrooms, no white-tiled kitchens or electric refrigerators, no bread-mixers or vacuum cleaners. All these are implicit in Mr. Borsodi's promise.

Well, then, what's wrong with the picture? There must be something wrong, because not many of us have done it. Fundamentally, I think, because it happens not to represent what women want these days. Many of us men would like to think, as we do our puttering at some congested cross-road, that our wives and families were somewhere out in the open country carrying on these homely but satisfactory activities, and we would be glad to go home and help when we could; but the real job is a woman's job. She would have to create it, and she would have to carry it on. If it is true, and I think it is, that women have let themselves be shifted out toward the periphery of life, when once they functioned at its very center, it might be expected that any opportunity would be studied carefully which offered them a way to recover a lost authority. The homestead scheme promises all this and considerably more. Of course, Mr. Borsodi did not discover it, nor did he discover the idea that machines might be really domesticated and made to assume their proper servant rôles. But he has at least pointed out the arguments, even if somewhat clumsily, and in an overphilosophical way.

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It is, of course, open to the cynic to point out that women did not like this kind of thing when they had it, and that they show not the least desire to go back to it. This profound resistance of theirs, he will tell you—I have heard him many times—arises from the knowledge that they have now most of the good things of life and hardly any of its responsibilities. Being practical creatures, without an iota of those curious qualities men talk about but can never define—duty, discipline, and all the rest—they intend to hang on to what they have and compromise nowhere. These questions seem to me fundamental to any discussion of changed ways of living; and since I have never seen the genuinely cynical male's attitude stated very clearly—though I hear a sentence here or a phrase there nearly every day—perhaps I may be forgiven for pursuing it further just to get the argument before us.

From saying, then, that women are not the kind of beings to tackle a job which is difficult and long because it promises well for the future of the race, your cynic will go right on to accuse them of such a complete indifference to ideas as to amount to paralysis of all impulses which are not instantaneously amusing or otherwise attractive. When women got the vote, he will remind you, they were going to do things about war, education, local politics, and all that. But nothing came of it; and nothing will ever come of any scheme which depends on the courage of women to move toward ideals or away from comforts.

Personally I distrust all these sexual generalizations just as I also distrust those which depend on racial differences. There may be something in what is said or there may not. Most men these days do seem, if you talk to them, to have far greater admiration for their grandmothers than they have for their wives—just as respect for lives well and usefully lived. That, however, does not prevent them from supporting their wives as well as, or better, than they can afford. And your cynic has remarks to make also with this as a starting point. He says that if women choose to devote themselves to activities which they and we knew perfectly well lie far below the levels of their ability; if they cannot or will not do anything toward such a reconstruction of society as will rehabilitate their authority, if, in other words, they acquiesce in deeds—though never, of course, in words—in the kind of lives they now have—we men can get along somehow. It is, after all, their funeral. What means most to us is the work we have to do. All the rest is, for us, so unimportant that any kind of filling-in can be got along with somehow. We are just now busy remaking the world and our philosophy of it. There is a new industrial revolution afoot, and we have got, or we think we have got, to find out what it means. The truth is that we can depend on women so little that we are learning to leave them out of the calculation. This we could not do in a rural civilization; nor could we in Mr. Borsodi's Utopia; but in the new world we are making there is no place—except as stenographers and machine-tenders—for women, unless, that is, they care to pretend that they are men and do things our way. Of course, if *they* should suddenly take it into their heads that factories and cities have stolen from them something precious, and if they should determine to get it back in the only way they can—which is by putting the household back at the center of things—they could make a nice hash of industrialism in a very short time. And shortly they might have us, as our grandmothers had our grandfathers, tending *their* gardens, doing *their* marketing, keeping up *their* homes.

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This aspect of Mr. Borsodi's picture deserves some attention. Men have won a wholesale domination of affairs as things are now. This is at the expense of doing most of the work; but work, with us, has never been a consideration which could weigh against power. If the other sex, in order to shirk work, thought, worry, is willing to give up its former career of influence, perhaps we ought not to raise any questions at all. Look, for instance, at Mr. Borsodi, as a horrible example. It is obvious that, in the situation in which he finds himself (for all the events he advocates have happened to him: house, garden, home-made bread, etc.), he has lost most of his power to affect real life much. If other women were really honest, wise, and energetic, they would perhaps imitate Mrs. Borsodi; but why should Mr. Borsodi expect other men to do anything about it. Suppose one of us did take the initiative and set up the whole institution somewhere, ready-to-run—chickens, bread-mixers, babies, automatic water-system, and kitchen garden—does anyone imagine for a minute that one woman in a thousand would have the brains, foresight, and stamina to make it run? Remember that, anyway at first, just down the concrete road there are apartments, sanitariums, delicatessens, and talkies. And that running a real home is a tough job with no extra pay for overtime! And granting the woman, are we ready to give up all the perquisites of a world arranged by and for ourselves?

The truth is that Mr. Borsodi, however good a philosopher he may be, has not found a Utopia. Forty books, even more ponderous than this, would not convince me that he has. He has only had a kind of luck that the rest of us cannot legitimately count on. Other men have got to go on calculating, as they have had to do in the past, on how they can make the world independent.

Seven Against the Codes

DAUGHTERS OF EVE. By GAMALIEL BRADFORD. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1930. $3.50.

Reviewed by BARTLET BREBNER

IT is an odd congeries of women of distinct personality which is made here and no principle except feminine variety comprehends Ninon de Lenclos, Madame de Maintenon, Madame Guyon, Mademoiselle de Lespinasse, Catherine the Great, George Sand, and Sarah Bernhardt. It is as if a lot of names had been shaken up in a hat and seven pulled out for as many magazine articles and then made bed-fellows in a book. Presumably the motive is the satisfaction of readers who will not tackle full-length biography, easy as that has been made in the cases of the majority of these subjects. Well, they will get etchings here instead of portraits, and probably it does not matter that they will mix them up as most novices confuse the contents of a portfolio. For this is not Mr. Bradford's best work, and a sameness of treatment robs the essays of the sting and sparkle which have differentiated the subjects in his other galleries of portraits. For instance, his modern analogy for both Ninon and George Sand is that mythical "girl of to-day," who has been too serviceable to moralists to have any freshness left for history. She is badly overworked to explain George Sand.

The scheme of the essays has some of the effect of a formula, even to the point of making it desirable for completeness in application to wonder whether Ninon may not, though evidence is lacking, have had a love of nature. In all there is in this book a perplexing mixture of arresting phrase and *cliché*, of detachment and sentimentality, which diminishes its appeal. The method often defeats the matter, and as it runs along, lulls the author's self-criticism so as to allow contradictions and little mistakes like the misnaming of a century or letting Poniatowski "go" off to Poland from Catherine when instead he was sent.

The essays which emerge most clearly and distinctly are those on the most difficult subjects, Madame de Maintenon and Madame Guyon. Ninon de Lenclos fits neatly into the frame of one who found the jest in the tragi-comedy of sex, Lespinasse into the frame of one who found in it consuming tragedy, and Catherine is revealed as a hearty German princess who found in Russia a recipe which allowed her to satisfy her appetites with genuine gusto. Louis XIV's puritan wife and helpmate and Fénelon's mystic guide are tougher subjects, and Mr. Bradford sharpens his weapons perceptibly to carve them into neat joints for the readers' table. He even leaves part of each for his readers to carve for themselves, and that would seem good doctrine, for it leaves curiosity unsatisfied and may lure readers to more ambitious attempts at acquaintance. In the same way one has the impression in the essay on George Sand that it would be better throughout to be more harsh with her romantic optimism and leave it to the reader to deliberate on the disillusion that broke through it more and more as time went on. Again, it is interesting that the author's own experience of Bernhardt's acting seems automatically to make him less sure that he is translating her entire. He mentions the hint of commonness in her which divided opinion and does not attempt to resolve it into the whole.

To those who do not, and want to, know these women, then, this book will usually be merely an introduction and a short acquaintance. The "psychographer" each time achieves at least that. Yet where his method is neatest and most practised, the art of biographical portraiture is weakest and the result least convincing. The natural recommendation to Mr. Bradford for the future is that he choose difficult subjects, and instead of letting his method bully him into uniformity attain diversity by leaving some fundamental questions unanswered.

Martin Van Buren

AN EPOCH AND A MAN. Martin Van Buren and His Times. By DENIS TILDEN LYNCH. New York: Horace Liveright. 1929. $5.

Reviewed by WILLIAM MACDONALD

MR. LYNCH has so weighted his narrative with the details of New York State politics in the first quarter of the nineteenth century as to make pretty heavy demands upon the attention of the reader who wants to understand *either* what all the tumult and the shouting were about or wherein they contributed to make Van Buren a national figure. The bitter struggles of the Livingston and Clinton factions are elaborated over many pages, and even the story of the Albany regency, far and away the most interesting as well as the most sinister of the political organizations with which Van Buren was early concerned is not easily disentangled from the mass of personal, local, and partisan incidents in which it is embedded. Yet Mr. Lynch was doubtless right in thinking that if Van Buren's career is to be correctly understood, the thirty years or so in which his habits and traits of character were being formed and his political experience developed are not to be neglected, for in politics, at least, the child was here the father of the man. Van Buren was certainly not an accidental President. He came to the office by a clear though devious route, and that route Mr. Lynch has traced with a meticulous care which leaves little to be added and as little to be desired.

Whether the picture that he has drawn differs greatly from the one to which American history has become accustomed is, perhaps, a matter of opinion, and I write of his book with all reserve as one who still thinks, in spite of all that Mr. Lynch has to say, that Van Buren was not a great man but a very small one. Certain misunderstanding, it is true, Mr. Lynch has done something to clear away. We know now, for example, that Van Buren was not altogether a time-serving follower of Jackson, and that he was not wholly occupied during Jackson's first term with keeping in Jackson's favor so that Jackson might make him Vice-President in 1832 and President in 1836. He did not agree with Jackson's uncompromising attitude toward the South Carolina nullificationists, and his later course in working for the establishment of an independent treasury system after the connection with the Bank of the United States had been broken, accorded with his own convictions as well as with those which Jackson had appeared to entertain. His presidential aspirations after 1840, again, were markedly tempered by his opposition to slavery, for although he remained essentially a Democrat he sacrificed the nomination in 1844 by a courageous letter opposing the annexation of Texas, and bolted his party in 1848 to head the Free Soil movement.

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Beyond these and a few like matters Mr. Lynch's biography seems only to deepen the old lines. The darkest phase of Van Buren's political career was his identification, body and soul, with the Albany regency and the theory of politics which it glorified, and to him, more than to anyone else, is to be attached the responsibility for extending to national politics the pernicious system of spoils which he had helped toward perfection in New York. It is to his credit that he played the part of a gentleman in the Mrs. Eaton scandal, bore with dignity the rebuff administered to him in the rejection by the Senate of his nomination as Minister to England, and stood his ground worthily when the panic of 1837 broke upon his presidential head, but he remained throughout a politician, essaying the tasks of statesmanship with a mind attuned to stratagems and spoils. Fortunately for the reader in whose mouth the politics of a century ago may leave an unpleasant taste, Mr. Lynch's reproduction of the political scene is set off with entertaining accounts of the New York and Washington society of the time, of Van Buren's travels and his contacts with famous people in this country and abroad, and of his warm personal friendships and remarkable popularity.

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Round About Parnassus

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THE verse of Peter Quennell is little known in this country, but this year Cape & Smith have published his "Poems" in one volume. Some of the work, he tells us, is now eight or nine years old, written before he had begun to write prose. Of the poems, "their genesis," he says, "was casual." "A sort of crystallization," he thinks, occurred. "Round an external stimulus, like the branch or twig, which Stendhal speaks of, tossed into the salt-mine, images, gradually accumulated, sometimes from experience, sometimes from reading, had suddenly flown together and formed novel and disturbing shapes." Which is an interesting and easily recognizable description of poetic creation. And yet, Quennell's poems do not remind us quite so much of crystals as of evanescent, floating fumes from an altar fire. Their rhythms are somewhat languid. They are nostalgic. They recall the Greek. But there is force and fire within the delicacy and fragility of their patterns.

"Leviathan" and "The Divers" are two of his best poems. He is a professional critic now. He is of the younger men. His mind would seem to be intensely eclectic, warden of an antique tradition, though his method is of his day.

Charles Norman, an American, who is now working on a biographical study of *Christopher Marlowe, whose life became an* absorption with him, is but twenty-six years old, but "The Bright World" is his second volume of poems. He has travelled in South America, France, and England. His new book begins with sonnets and preludes that tell a love story. He is capable of phrase such as

Nor am I bitter for the hours in vain
Wherein I labored as a madman might
To lure a dream bright-armored from his brain
In the unholy chapel of delight.

Again, not a bad description of the intensity that goes into the making of poetry. Mr. Norman also conveys well the atmosphere of his city, New York, though in a manner neither blatant nor obvious. The city is often background for sad and ascetic thought. The outward and visible tumult reminds him that

. . . secrecy is best
In sorrow as in love;
Protect the timid dove
That flutters in the breast.
It is more glamorous to be
Immured in secrecy,
Than, speaking the hot words,
See them like flown birds.

That is an understandable if rather too precious mood; but Yeats has sung the same mood how ringingly, with what panache!

And like a laughing string
Whereon mad fingers play
Amid a place of stone,
Be secret and exult,
Because of all things known
That is most difficult.

This illustrates the fact that Mr. Norman has not yet clenched his title as poet. In his former book his accent seemed, somehow, surer. Here there is a good deal that moves us, and at the end of the book there are indications in his vignettes of Telemachus, Faustus, and King Henry that a fine poetic dramatist may be in the making. But in his work, as in Quennell's, we desire to be more roused. Profound sadness has produced some of the greatest poetry in the English language. That is uncontrovertible. But the straw in the bricks was often of another fibre; metallic bitterness, wiry irony, knitted resolution. These things emerge in a few of Norman's poems. And there is beauty in the more languid desperations. On the whole, this young poet gives much promise, though his epithet and phrase might often, in this book, be more salient. At a guess, this would seem to be an in-between volume, a comparative lull before a new gathering of power.

Two years ago Crosby Gaige published Rolfe Humphries's "Europa." We think we have commented upon this small silver-clad volume before. The title poem is as simple and direct as poetry may well be. It tells a rather old story in fresh and strong fashion. Of such poems as "Eloi, Eloi," "Parting Shot," "Dream," "A Prayer," "Hardwood Woman," "Æolus," and of the sonnets, which form the latter half of the book, one may say that the presentation is usually original,—not metrically original but in the use of image and in the particular sardonic attitude. The poet is a highly independent young man, even boastful. He is not for any snare. He likes the iron taste of life upon his tongue. He can even be gorgeously fantastic, as in "Sonnet 326," mocking at himself. To quote a good example of his powers of dissection, here is an objective sonnet which spares us nothing of a certain situation:

ONE FLESH

If there were modern magic, she would turn
Into a bullet, cursing, in her pride,
The puny element that led her burn
So hot for impact, so ungratified.
For she knew what she wanted—she would die
Against a rock too strong for her to move,
In battered ripping bitter ecstacy
Kissing the fierce stone body of her love.

But he would be a dull-green lump of sponge,
Soft as wet weeds across her rage, to heal
The threshing fever, check her savage plunge,
Embed in ooze the desperate crying steel—
—Or else an ashy heap of sand, to choke
Her madness with his dusty yellow cloak.

This is not dulcet poetry. It is a matter, however, powerfully and completely stated, a psychological analysis of a comparatively simple situation which has the virtues of sharp insight and clear exposition. "Conference" and "Words to Be Flung up a Stairway" are other sonnets that etch sharply certain moods of love. There are thirty-four poems in all, the sonnets being slightly less than half of the total. Not all are memorable, but for a book so slight in bulk there are enough that impress. We are certainly not satisfied that Mr. Humphries has completely extended his powers. But he has made a notable beginning. And again we come back to the title-poem which, as direct narrative and a picture strong in every line of its delineation, no other verse in the book can surpass.

Samuel Hoffenstein originally introduced us to Carlton Talbott when his first book, "Ballyhoo for a Mendicant," appeared. Mr. Talbott's chief gift is for the grotesque. As for his gallery of characters in the present volume, "Droll Parade," what is said upon the jacket of the book is no less than the truth, "There are heroic Welshmen, sly Burgundians, erotic Carolingians, sanctified Irishmen, inflated Florentines, horney-browed Puritans, long-faced Elizabethans, bucolic Dutchmen, unfortunate Flemings, neurasthenic Jacobeans, idiotic Augustans, libidinous Poles, yodling Swiss, freeborn Britishers, and even a couple of star-spangled Yankees. The periods range from the year 900 to the year 1900."

Talbott is an exceedingly clever rhymester and has a quaint wit. Somehow we rather wish his talent were for drawing pictures rather than for verse. His verse makes such amusing pictures in the mind. As an example of rhyme almost Bentley-esque, take these two verses from "Mesericord":

"Dear me, what a dry day
Is Holy Friday,"
Says John of Gaunt.
"God knows
I yearn for the Romaunt
Of the Rose!"

"He means pork,"
Whispers the Duke of York,
Nudging the mealy-
Mouthed Bishop of Ely,
Who, wrapped in his chasuble,
Feels rather irascible.

Browning, in his lighter moments, would have enjoyed such fooling, though no one has yet surpassed the rhymes he wrote himself, with his tongue in his cheek. Talbott seems to us to have turned his Muse loose in an old rare book and print shop. His gift consists in keeping mustiness from his vignettes. They have a quirky life of their own. They are eccentric but vivid. Robert Graves had somewhat the same gift of yore. Yet, though the execution of Talbott's verse is often clever in the extreme, the end of it all seems rather trivial so far as real poetry is concerned. The fantasicality of De la Mare, for instance, lingers in the mind. Talbott's own fades rather quickly. He is charmingly ephemeral. He is to be recommended for the idle half hour when one wishes merely to be amused and cherishes a desire for old chap-books set to verse, or for looking over the drawings of Cruikshank, Rowlandson, and their ilk. He furnishes intellectual caviare and anchovies,—which are, indeed, not at all to be despised.

Giovanni Papini's

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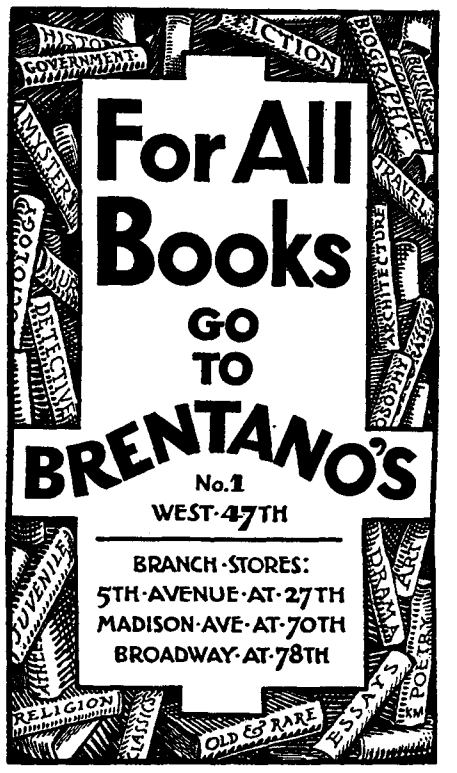

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Vladimir Mayakovsky

By ALEXANDER I. NAZAROFF

ON April 15, 1930, the New York dailies printed a short cable from Moscow announcing the suicide of Vladimir Mayakovsky: after returning home with a young actress from an all-night party, he shot himself through the heart and died within a few minutes. The news hardly produced any impression in this city. But to the literary and political world of Moscow it was a thunderbolt. Mayakovsky, the leader of the Russian Futurists, was by far the most famous poet of the Soviet realm; moreover, it is not an exaggeration to say that he was the most outstanding figure of Russia's "new" artistic world in general. More than one hundred thousand men paid the last tribute to his body, and entire special newspaper issues were devoted to the event.

What, however, renders the event especially significant is this: Five years ago, Serguey Yessenin, the scandalous husband of Isadora Duncan and the only Soviet poet equalling Mayakovsky in fame, disposed of his life in a similar way. The two "greatest" "revolutionary" poets—both suicides (not to speak of rather frequent suicides of such second-rate Soviet writers as Andrey Sobol, etc.)! Is this not strange indeed? One of the chief causes of Yessenin's death lay in his disillusionment. A peasant by birth (he was famous precisely as a "peasant poet"), he at first was sincerely carried away by the Soviet revolution; but, after having travelled abroad and seen European culture, he suddenly became aware of the pitiful and self-satisfied spiritual misery in which Russia lived under the Communist rule, was disgusted with it, with himself, and with his own work, and could stand it no longer(it is so, at least, that his closest friend, A. Marienhof, explained it in his "Novel without Lying," 1928).

Why did Mayakovsky kill himself? For similar reasons, or, as the Soviet papers assert, because of an "unfortunate love"? I do not know. I only know that the love explanation sounds unconvincing. To imagine the ultra-cynic, Mayakovsky, whose attitude towards love was highly "revolutionary," and who himself broadly advertised his debauchery, killing himself because of an inaccessible woman is as difficult as it is to conceive a normal man committing suicide because of having swallowed an undigestible piece of food. But even if his "unfortunate love" was not a sheer invention, one may believe that it was not the only cause of his suicide. Apparently, there also were causes of public and political nature. To this, by the way, he himself alluded rather clearly in that short note which, before firing the fatal shot, he addressed to his friends. "This," he wrote, "is not a brave way to go out of life for a revolutionist; but there is no other way, and I can stand it no longer. . . ."

Mayakovsky's public career began very early: he was a boy of fourteen when he joined, in 1907, the Russian Bolshevist Party. Early, too, he became a poet: he was but nineteen or twenty when he was recognized as an unrivalled leader of the Russian Futurists. Yet, in the old Russia, Futurists were regarded simply as a comical mistake and a scandal; few took them in earnest (the fact that Mayakovsky publicly recited his poems in a woman's yellow blouse and with green pencil stripes on his face, naturally contributed to it). When, however, Mayakovsky's party—the Bolshevists—came to power in 1917, his star rose very high. He immediately became the official poet and glorifier of the revolution and of the Soviet régime. His poems were published by "Gossizdat" (the State Publishing Company), endless articles were written about him; for glorifying, he was glorified. Intoxicated, he went so far as to demand from the Soviet Government that he and his followers, the Futurists, should be made "literary dictators" of Russia. . . .

What kind of a poet was Mayakovsky? His verses were in full harmony with his personality—with his enormous, husky figure, roughneck manners and jests, and roaring laughter. It was not for nothing that he began his career by a manifesto entitled, "A Slap in Public Opinion's Face"; his poetry is essentially unpoetic, rowdy, loud, and its chief purpose seems to be to scandalize, to shock. One has the impression that Mayakovsky liked—and sang— the revolution as a colossal scandal, as a "slap"; and it is perhaps for this reason that his verses are so often disfigured by obscenities which would seem unprintable in other countries. Thus, he was more a buffoon than a poet. Yet, it cannot be denied that he was a talented buffoon. In his comically hyperbolic comparisons and impertinences there was real originality; the technique of his verse was novel and striking. He may have been repellent, but he certainly was an outstanding figure.

In his last two or three years the Soviet Government sharply changed its attitude toward him. Although he remained a Communist, his ideology was condemned as "unorthodox" and even "undesirable": he was too much of an individualist and too unruly a person to fit in the Communistic ranks in which no man is supposed to think for himself, along the lines not foreseen by the Marxist doctrine. *Noviy Lef*, a review which he edited, was closed. The Soviet critics referred to his new works with ironical disapproval, often with derision. And they declared his two new plays, "Bedbug" and "Bathhouse," to be trash and flat failures. In a word, he became, as it were, out of place in Soviet Russia. This, apparently, seriously wounded and tortured him. Is it not here that one ought to look for at least one of the causes of his suicide?

Italian Painting

LA PEINTURE ITALIENNE DES ORIGINES AU XVIe SIÈCLE. Par RÉNÉ SCHNEIDER. PARIS: Editions of VAN OEST. 1929.

Reviewed by AGNES MONGAN
Fogg Art Museum

CONFRONTED by Professor Schneider's book one thinks inevitably of its equivalent in English, or at least of the two books which, with a somewhat similar intention, treat of the same centuries and the same schools: Mr. Berenson's "Italian Painters of the Renaissance" and Professor Mather's "History of Italian Painting." A comparison with them, however, is perhaps unfair because Professor Schneider has allowed himself not four volumes, or even one full one, but only fifty-seven pages of text. To condense the history of three centuries of Italian painting into such a brief space is no enviable task. That he accomplishes the feat with no apparent effort is due to a sure and thorough knowledge that guides his unfailing choice of the significant.

Written with that felicity of phrasing with which French scholarship clothes its power of trenchant analysis, "La Peinture Italienne" moves suavely from Cimabue, Cavallini, and the early stirrings of a national style of painting in Italy through the schools of Florence, Sienna, Venice, and Padua to Correggio and the beginning of the baroque period. Michelangelo and some of the great Venetians, earlier than Correggio in time but belonging to a later epoch because of their characteristics and influence, are kept for the next volume, now in preparation. Rather than the closely-reasoned method of his "conferences," Professor Schneider has written as he speaks when addressing that most august and discerning of audiences, Les Amis du Louvre, and it is to such people, who wish to refresh their memories with a brief but succinct account of currents and characteristics, rather than to the scholar that the book will prove useful.

Dispensing with Professor Mather's details and Mr. Berenson's definitions, it can, with amazing clarity, give an artist or even a period in a paragraph. Sixty-four plates in heliogravure illustrate the points made in the text and a six page bibliography offers material for further study. It is, however, in the latter that the great fault of the book is betrayed. One suspected haste in seeing the "Niccola da Uzzano" of Donatello called a marble, the "Vision of St. Bernard" of the Badia given to Filippo rather than Filippino Lippi, and the Fra Angelicos of San Marco listed as at the Uffizi. These errors, regarded at first as little more than slips, are indicative of a carelessness which the bibliography makes only the more apparent. Under the headings by centuries the books are listed neither chronologically, alphabetically, nor in the order of their importance. A bibliography of fourteen books on Botticelli fails to mention Horn's great monograph or the superb work of Yashiro. In similar fashion the accepted authorities on Angelico, Crivelli, and Correggio are conspicuous by their absence, though several second-rate books are named. Signora Vavala's unique study on early Veronese painting is erroneously called Sienese. Just as it would have been wiser in the text to have avoided, as examples of an artist's work, painting still subject to discussion, so in the bibliography it would have been better to have singled out only those volumes concerning whose scholarship there can be no question.

Tale of a Vanished Land

by Harry E. Burroughs

Memories of a childhood in Russia. "Absorbing autobiography, fascinating description." — Boston Herald. "The little town of Kashoffka may take a permanent place in English letters."—Boston Transcript. Illustrated, $3.50

Roger Williams

by Emily Easton

He defied the Puritans, made friends with the Indians, and founded a new state dedicated to religious freedom. This is a readable and yet authentic account of a great man. Illustrated, $5.00.

Builders of the Bay Colony

by Samuel Eliot Morison

"Professor Morison makes early Boston live again in flesh-and-blood color, even as his 'Maritime History of Massachusetts' brought the sea-farer to life." —Lewis Gannett in the N. Y. Herald Tribune. Illustrated, $5.00

The Anvil

by Gustav Frenssen

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Amiel's Philine

Translated by Van Wyck Brooks

"This new volume is much more satisfactory and much better edited than the original selection which rendered Amiel's name famous. It was a happy idea to make his love story the thread on which to hang extracts."—Havelock Ellis. $3.50

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The Gossip Shop

By Rachel Field

EARLY Summer has brought an unusually good crop of juveniles to our desk. First of all there was the long anticipated Helen Sewell Alphabet, accurately dubbed an "A B C for Everyday." Miss Sewell's drawings of little girls and boys are as modern and up-to-date a set of youngsters as you could find on any beach this season. Even her Scottie dog has been correctly plucked and his collar is irreproachable! The Macmillan Company has given excellent color reproductions and an amazing amount of them for one-fifty. Also from the same company come two books that should appeal especially to young boys of mechanical and scientific inclinations. One is "How the Derrick Works," a fascinating and accurate account of this modern invention both written and illustrated by Wilfred Jones. The other is called "Fingerfins." It is the tale of a Sargasso fish by Wilfred Swancourt Bronson, who went on one of the William Beebe Expeditions and who therefore writes and draws as one having authority. Both books are more than worth the two dollars they cost, and we should like to meet the eight or nine-year-old boy they will not keep absorbed for several hours at least.

Another alphabet that tickled us mightily was written and pictured by no less than William Makepeace Thackeray himself. This was done years ago as a labor of love for a small boy who had difficulty with his letters. The grandchildren of this same small boy were responsible for its publication, and it has all the charm and spontaneity of hastily penned sketches, not intended for publication. We particularly liked N, which shows a leering and long-nosed sailor and bears the legend:

N is a nose, happy the man who shows
So red, so long, so beautiful a nose.

This is from Harper's, and is pleasantly small and compact.

Another book of comfortable, readable size with very spirited pictures is the product of those clever young artists, Berta and Elmer Hader. It is called "Under the Pig-Nut Tree," a title which would have enchanted us as a child. Here are grasshoppers and elves and all sorts of little creatures of a size to hide under leaves and climb up dandelion stems. It is told and pictured very simply for rather young readers, and Knopf has brought it out with nice color and large clear print. We thought the text could have been written with considerably more charm and distinction, but it is an engaging little book all the same.

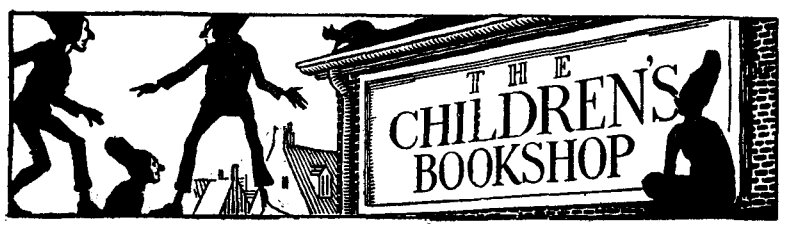
The F. A. Stokes Company has sent out notices about a youthful Treasure Hunt among books to be conducted through summer reading. Twenty-five questions have been compiled, each being taken from some well known juvenile published by the company, and to the fifty contestants under sixteen who send in the best answers a choice of any Stokes book for young people will be awarded. Further particulars about this may be had by writing to the F. A. Stokes Company offices at 449 Fourth Avenue.

From Anne Stoddard, of the Century Company, we learned the other day that the *St. Nicholas Magazine* has been taken over by the Scholastic Publishing Company of Pittsburgh. The new editor is to be Mr. Maurice Robinson. We hope the *St. Nicholas* League Department will never be changed, for we consider that one of the high lights of our own particular past. It was excellent training, too, for after the cherished poem or essay or drawing was mailed in, there was no way of knowing its fate for three months. After this ordeal in suspense no later delay in receiving publishers' verdicts has had any terrors for us!

There were great doings in connection with the Junior Literary Guild on June 10th at the Hotel Chatham. We only regret that we were not there to participate in the double ceremony, for it was in honor of the Junior Guild's first year of activity and Katherine Ulrich's engagement to James Wise. Miss Ulrich, managing editor for the past year, was identified with the juveniles published by Coward-McCann before she came to the Guild offices. She will be married in Minnesota in July and later will travel abroad with her husband, whose legal duties take him to Paris and Berlin. After a six months' leave Miss Ulrich plans to return to these parts and will continue to work with the Guild. Meantime, Helen Ferris, another Junior Literary Guild officer, will take over the managing editorship. Our special congratulations and best wishes go to everybody concerned.

And now it's June and soon we shall be gathering roses while and where we may, and only a few days ago it seems we were riding on a swan boat in the Boston Public Gardens with apple trees in bloom. Yes, time is still a-flying. And then there is Oliver Herford's version, which we like almost better than Herrick's:

Gather kittens while ye may,
Time brings only sorrow,
And the kittens of to-day
Will be old cats to-morrow.



Conducted by Marion Ponsonby

Reviews

LUCIAN GOES A-VOYAGING. By Agnes Carr Vaughn. Illustrated by Harrie Wood. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1930. $3.

Reviewed by Catherine Woodbridge

ONE does not naturally expect to find material for children in so sophisticated and polished a writer as Lucian. Quite apart from the centuries which divide him from modern life, his quality is essentially refined and technical. In the case of his "True Story," however, he has directed his mastery of style to a *tour de force* of visual imagination. This ability to visualize is a fundamental means of appeal to children, and when an author as gifted as Lucian lets his imagination go, the results are sure to be stimulating to flying minds not yet quite adjusted to a world of fact. As in the case of Swift, an earlier Gulliver has found his way to the children's bookshelf.

Agnes Carr Vaughn is responsible for this. She deserves high credit because Lucian requires more than mere translation. Her achievement includes putting him into simpler and, in some cases, more modern terms without marring the total effect. Necessary pruning and rounding out have been done so skilfully as to be imperceptible.

The story concerns the fantastic adventures of Lucian and his shipmates, who are shot up to the moon on a hurricane, then swallowed by a mammoth whale in whose interior they spend nearly a year. They escape in a most daring and ingenious manner and, continuing from amazement to amazement, finally reach the Rock of the Beyond, where the author solemnly leaves them growing eyes in the back of their heads.

The narrative is told in a matter-of-fact manner with very concrete details which give an amusing illusion of reality. The exploration of the interior of the whale has some of the fascination of Jules Verne without his suspense. The tone is frankly humorous, so that the interest is always in just how they will escape, with very little worry as to whether they will. Lucian himself, who guides the expedition, is much too resourceful to be worsted by any being, however fantastic. This very casual hard-headedness of his, together with some of the episodes which resemble the "Odyssey," suggest that here again Lucian was engaged in satire. Whatever such intent he may have had, is, however, beside the point for children. For them he will simply be spinning a good yarn. Harrie Wood has contributed delightful drawings of most authentic Greek inspiration of some of the most absurd and fantastic creatures that any extravaganza has created.

WATCHING EUROPE GROW. By Cornelia Stratton Parker. New York: Horace Liveright. 1930. $4.

Reviewed by Edward Pulling

THIS book represents the latest attempt to popularize European history for young readers. The importance of the goal which the author has set for herself cannot be denied, the general scheme of the book she has written is a fascinating one, but the result leaves much to be desired.

An historically-minded uncle takes his young nephew and niece on a three months' tour of Europe by aeroplane. Their itinerary is planned to include a number of historic places and to visit them in the order of their chronological importance, starting at the year One. In each place they imagine themselves to be living through the years which made it famous, and in this way they "watch Europe grow" for twenty centuries. Of course, they head first for Rome, and for the first six hundred years of the Christian era they are Romans and early Christians. For the next six hundred years they pretend to be Benedictine monks who have migrated along the old Roman road to Treves in North Germany. (This tedious seventh century journey of two months is imagined during the course of a ten hour aeroplane flight.) Afterwards they are robber barons in castles on the Rhine, prosperous burghers in medieval trade towns, followers of Martin Luther —and so on, until finally they attend a contemporary session of the Assembly of the League of Nations at Geneva in the role of twentieth century American citizens and bid adieu to the reader while posing as political philosophers from the vantage point of a Swiss mountain top.

Everywhere they go they pay attention only to the ruins or buildings of the period in which they imagine themselves to be living. As they fly from one place to another they are busy imagining the difficulties which would beset them were they making the journey on foot or on horseback as in days of yore, and preparing themselves for the new roles they must assume when they land in another country and in another century.

This is a unique and glamorous idea, but unfortunately it is not carried out with much success. The author has attempted to do too much. She has apparently tried to cater at once to very youthful readers as well as to high school students, and the result, I think, will not satisfy either group. The main criticism of the book is that it is too old for the young and too young for the old. To boys and girls who are young enough not to object to the childish and artificial style which Mrs. Parker uses, the vague chronology and sudden changes of locale will be almost meaningless. Those who are old enough to have acquired a knowledge of medieval and modern European history necessary to an appreciation of Uncle Mat's peripatetic comments will be irritated by the facetious conversations he carries on with his nephew and niece.

The book is profusely illustrated by some two hundred illustrations, which seem to have been chosen with discrimination. But not so the bibliography included as an appendix. The author laments the fact that so many titles had to be left out. The reader is inclined to ask why so many have been put in. Long lists of books without comment mean nothing to young, inexperienced readers. A few carefully chosen books with a helpful commentary on each are of far greater value than a long undiscriminating list.

FINGERFINS: The Tale of a Sargasso Fish. By Wilfrid S. Bronson. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1930. $2.

Reviewed by Ida Mellen

SELF-PITY is a grievous sorrow, but one that most of us older folk strive with difficulty to suppress when we consider the educational privileges of the modern child and recall our own school days, so barren by comparison. Barren principally because then the child's instinctive feeling of kinship for the animal kingdom, his yearning for closer knowledge of it, were almost starved for want of something to feed on.

Now the food is available, and one of the choicest contributions to this larder of the children is "Fingerfins," a little book of perfect accuracy and excellent illustrations, the author of which, as one of the staff artists on a scientific expedition to the Sargasso Sea, had a unique opportunity to acquaint himself with the habits of the mouse fish of the Sargasso weed until he knew well that little fish's ways. And the mouse fish, also known as Sargasso fish, he calls "Fingerfins" because of the remarkable, grasping properties of its pectoral fins. His drawings, illustrating the resemblance between the construction of fishes and other sea creatures and objects found on land, and the manner in which their motions are imitated by such common things as steam engines and racing cars, provide a fund of happy information. The little hand of "Fingerfins" has ten fingers and closes like a laundry bag, the porpoise is built like an airship, the sailfish like an old-time warship, the Sargasso weed with its gas-filled berries and dark streamers is like rumpled brown ribbons with tiny balloons attached.

The text gives equally vivid word pictures of "Fingerfins," his adventures and companions, the way he prevented his grandpa from eating him up, how he looked in the aquarium aboard ship where Mr. Bronson made the pictures of him, and, best of all, how he escaped from his human captors and got back to his beloved Sargasso weed. The descriptions are very intimate:

When he yawned, an extra lot of water rushed into his mouth, and then, when he closed it, the water squirted out of two holes, one under each arm. That made him feel refreshed.

Mr. Bronson does not humanize the ocean creatures, but shows each from its own angle with a gratifying "live and let live" sentiment that veils the natural butchery of the sea.

The illogical mother who spanks the chair because the youngster tumbles over it would do well to read how "Fingerfins" tried to swallow a baby eel and what an "awful shaking" it gave him. There is no hint of punishing the eel for hurting the hero:

Naturally the eel bit with its terrible teeth and wriggled to get away.

Every child who can read English should say, "Thank you, Mr. Bronson!" for this delightful story.

THE PICTURE BOOK OF SHIPS. By Peter Grimmage. Pictured by Helen Craig. Macmillan. 1930. $2.

Reviewed by Captain Felix Riesenberg

PETER GRIMMAGE and Helen Craig have produced a delightful book on ships, describing them simply but truly, and picturing them in the many fascinating aspects which interpret them. They take us from the beginning, when men learned to paddle and to sail, and we see the procession of craft, canoes, catamarans, punts, dorys, and skiffs.

There is a good bit of seamanship, set forth simply and correctly. How many of us know the difference between a brig and a hermaphrodite brig? And how about the brigantine? Simple sketches define these rigs and many others, and more elaborate drawings in color show the many craft in their natural environment, as one might say. The many types of steamers and power craft are shown, both merchant and naval. Small craft of every sort are treated fully.

This is a book to recommend to youngsters just becoming aware of the ancient lure of the sea—it starts them right and is a bright, seamanlike job.

A Protest

To the Editor of the *Children's Bookshop*:

MADAM:

As a rule, I no longer even smile indulgently when people call me adolescent; I merely stand by pathetically for the emancipation I expect to be the gift of the gods on my twentieth birthday. However, Miss Vance's article on the content of a library for "the late 'teens" hurts my pride —hurts it enough to make me snap out of a post-examination languor long enough to write a letter.

Miss Vance seems to have forgotten entirely the fact that in these days of hectic scholarship a person in the late 'teens is most often found in college; I am that age and expect to register as a junior in the fall—that, too, with no more than an ordinary amount of precocity.

All the way down Miss Vance's list, until I arrived at the selections of poetry, there was just one book that I have in my own library, "Lord Jim"—and I had always been somewhat vain of my two hundred and fifty volumes! As a matter of fact, I had only read some four or five of Miss Vance's list—and this despite the fact that, extra-curricularly speaking, I manage a half-dozen books a week. A little investigation showed that my younger brother, who is not yet thirteen, has read the list very nearly in its entirety. My family has always been unalarmingly normal and I am inclined to think that it is less liable to be in the wrong than is Miss Vance.

Then what do we read? For this, you will have to rely on my mere statement. On my desk there are, exclusive of texts, eleven volumes; I am listing them with no change whatever.

Lewis: "François Villon."
Chaucer: "Canterbury Tales."
Hawthorne: "Tanglewood Tales."
Abelard: "Letters to Heloise."
Shakespeare: "King Lear."
Hudson: "Green Mansions."
Meredith: "Richard Feverel."
Gross: "Nize Baby."
Sir John Mandeville's Travels.
Dostoievsky: "Brothers Karamazov."
Cicero: "Treatise on the Nature of the Gods."

I hope that this list will have some quality of enlightenment.

Bernard Krasnow.

Richmond Hill, N. Y.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Biography

GOLD RUSH DAYS WITH MARK TWAIN. By WILLIAM R. GILLIS. Albert & Charles Boni. 1930.

We have here a compilation of the personal recollections of an old gentleman who was the friend of Mark Twain in the days when he lived among the mining camps of the West. The author was, until his recent death, custodian of the Mark Twain cabin near Tuttletown in California, and has doubtless had plenty of opportunity to rehearse the anecdotes and yarns of the hectic 'sixties when he and Mark were mining partners. The result is a collection of interesting chapters, most of which have to do with Mark Twain and Jackass Hill.

The book contains chapters about the Vigilantes, about frontier killings, "bad" men, hold-ups, stage robberies, and the night life of San Francisco. Yet the tone of the whole is rather humorous, gay, full of the rough horse-play and outrageous practical jokes which the boys inflicted upon Mark Twain with tireless ingenuity. Mark's reactions to these pranks make him appear a rather vain, irascible, and sentimental creature. The author was perhaps a devout hero worshipper. But, if so, he fails to convert the reader to his fath. In fact, most of the incidents portray Mark in a grotesque posture —an effect greatly heightened by the curious stilted journalese employed by all concerned even during the most ludicrous and ribald scenes. But for all that, or perhaps because of that, the reader will find delight here. The adventures of Mark Twain on the frontier; his hold-up, his duel, his boxing match, his *Nose,* and even the apocryphal yarns which the author repeats only to scout—all these are distinctly amusing. "Gold Rush Days with Mark Twain" is one of those agreeable books which fill gaps in autobiographies by supplying details which great men would be glad to leave in the belly of oblivion. A slight, but apparently authentic, book, and amusing.

CUP OF GOLD. A Life of Henry Morgan, Buccaneer. With Occasional Reference to History. By JOHN STEINBECK. McBride. 1929. $2.50.

This account of the life of Henry Morgan, the great English pirate of the seventeenth century, is far from satisfactory. Mr. Steinbeck apparently gave little intelligent consideration to his use of historical material, and as a result history and fiction are ineptly blended. There is not enough history, for instance, to enable us to understand Morgan's appointment as Lieutenant Governor of Jamaica; nor is there enough fiction (that is, interpretation and elaboration of character) to make plausible the hocus-pocus about the girl in Panama. In fact, Mr. Steinbeck fumbles nearly every problem of novel-construction that is presented to him. Furthermore, a kind of romantic mysticism, cropping up in the most unlikely places, makes the whole business sweetish and sticky.

POST MORTEMS OF MERE MORTALS. Essays, Historical and Medical. By C. MACLAURIN. Doubleday, Doran. 1930. $2.50.

Thirty-two "essays, historical and medical"—essays on Anne Boleyn, Jeanne d'Arc, the Empress Theodora, Charles V, "Philip II, and the Arterio-Sclerosis of Statesmen," "Mr. and Mrs. Pepys," Napoleon, and five other "Post Mortems" reprinted from their volume of 1925—"Dr. Johnson," "Ivan the Terrible," Queen Elizabeth, "Luther's Devil," Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Spinoza, and a baker's dozen more of "Mere Mortals" have here been collected under the more or less facetious blanket term, "Post Mortems of Mere Mortals." If a little common in their jokes sometimes—Dr. MacLaurin was in the army, surgeon in the world war—these essays seem generally competent historically and in a literary way. They never insult the intelligence for long nor forget the risibilities for longer than a truly beautiful passage here and there.

A generous, whimsical, rather intensely humanizing book.

A. W. H. T. G. TO HIS FRIENDS. By *W. H. Fra Temple Gairdner.* Macmillan. $2.

ANHELLI. By *Juljusz Slowacki.* Translated by *Dorothea Prall Raden.* Edited by *George Rapall Noyes.* Allen & Unwin.

JOHN DEWEY: The Man and His Philosophy. Harvard University Press.

NIGHT NURSE. By *Dora Macy.* Brentanos. $2.

A BOOK OF BIOGRAPHY. By *Robert Metcalf Smith.* Doubleday, Doran. $2.

Fiction

THE IMMORALIST. By ANDRÉ GIDE. Knopf. 1930. $2.50.

Early in the canon of André Gide's work "L'Immoraliste" carried forth the gospel of human irresponsibility. Though Gide's ideas, like railway time-tables, are often subject to change without notice, he has clung fascinated to this one conception almost throughout his long career, while varying somewhat in its statement. Most writers are anxious nowadays to demonstrate in every possible way why their characters do things, how each action has its cause, and each cause takes root in some psychological truth of character or environment. Not so Gide. "Supposing," he seems to say, "a man to be strong enough to commit an absolutely unmotivated and apparently inexplicable act, merely out of curiosity for the consequences, such a man becomes to me far more interesting than the run of average humankind whose lives work along predetermined lines, like the quantities in a mathematical problem."

Consequently we have the many Gide heroes, all of whom act in what would ordinarily be considered eccentric ways, culminating in the Lafcadio of "Les Caves du Vatican," who pushes a fellow traveler out of a train to provide the police with an unmotivated crime. Michel, the Immoralist, is less definite in his activities, but he joins the young rascals of the district in poaching on his own preserves in order to understand their sensations, overlooks thefts by his servants when he catches them in the act, and, finally, though supposedly much in love with his wife, kills her by his restlessness and urge to travel when she falls ill with a disease he has himself given her.

The ideas are frequently confused and confusing, as in all that Gide writes, yet the attraction of an active and inquisitive mind expressing itself in an exquisite prose will remain, no matter what conflicting conclusions may be drawn from the author's prolongation of the last century's search after sensation, curiosities, and the charms of irrational living. Gide's "Immoralist" is in any case a figure of universal knowledge in France, a type as well known and of considerably greater influence now than Huysmans's more effete "Des Esseintes." Certainly it is a far from negligible book, and one it is good to have in Mme. Bussy's English version.

THE AMAZON. By ELLIOT PAUL. Liveright. 1930. $2.50.

The war, after ten years, has become again one of the most popular of subjects. It appears as background, as omnipresent *Ananke,* almost as actor; books portray its effects on soldiers of all armies, on nurses, and on civilians at home. Mr. Paul has taken for his subject one of the vague rumors that we used to hear from time to time, a rumor of a company of women on active service with one of the Allied armies.

That Mr. Paul has been able to make his story credible is much to say; that he has entirely avoided all temptations to sensationalism in working out his plot, is more; but perhaps it is most to his credit that he has been able, even with so remarkable an initial situation, to center the interest chiefly in character. The tale is told in fragments, as it presents itself to an American newspaperman in Europe, who hears the rumor, is incredulous but interested, and, partly by chance and partly by deliberate purpose, finds a number of people who can tell him more and more about the women and especially their female lieutenant, and at last finds the Amazon herself. The narrator's unbelief is at first as the reader's; and the reader's conviction grows steadily with the narrator's, until one is quite prepared to believe in the noble figure of Lieutenant Alberta Snyder when one encounters her. She is excellently drawn, a woman of great spirit and strength, with burning convictions about the equality of the sexes and a passionate desire to bear her share in the war, but with nothing of the unfeminine or inverted woman about her. From the time that she appears, the book becomes powerful and tender; the narrator, who was inclined to be colorless during the earlier chapters, takes on character as if by reflection from her. One regrets, then, that one was not allowed to make her acquaintance sooner; the book might have been made convincing, one feels, without spending half of it on preparing for the entrance of the principal character who is its justification. The first part is an interesting study in tech-

(Continued on page 1150)

« New Scribner Publications »

Fiction

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"Philo Vance is seen at his best in 'The Scarab Murder Case.' . . . Van Dine again scores a triumph." — *Springfield Republican.* $2.00

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Points of View

An Open Letter

(We print below, in somewhat abbreviated form, a letter from the house of Simon and Schuster to Alfred Harcourt, publisher of "King Mob," which book is reviewed on page 1139.)

My dear Mr. Harcourt:

Mr. Simon has already acknowledged your letter of April 18th and the advance set of sheets of "King Mob: A Study of the Present-Day Mind," by Frank K. Notch. Since he had time for only a brief comment while away from the office, I am taking upon myself the pleasure of acknowledging your courtesy, and the duty of examining in some detail those sections of the author's work which pertain to our publications. On Page 21 *et seq.* Mr. Notch says:

> . . . . The change lies in an abandonment of the crude appeal of praise (which after all does relate, however dishonestly, to the intrinsic character of the book) and a concentration on the creation of a Mob spirit around a book, that is, a concentration on quite extrinsic values. Perhaps the most brilliant and most successful—certainly the most representative—product of the new school is the house of Simon and Schuster. The young men who, within a period of five years, have lifted the firm from obscurest beginnings to nation-wide fame, had grasped by instinct the principles of successful culture-publishing. The key-word is "panic." The public must be "panicked" (as good vaudevillians are said to "panic" the audience) into the buying of a book. In developing the art of creating round books an atmosphere of high fashionableness and cultural exclusiveness such publishers have evolved a new technique. It is as hard to fight off the mass suggestiveness of their advertising as it is to resist a marching regiment. . . . . The lonely individual feels the cold sweat of terror breaking out on all his body, civilization is marching by him, trumpets sounding, drums rataplan. Overcoming his paralysis and the last appeal of his common sense, he rushes out to the bookstore, and gets the volume. He looks at the first few pages and the ghastly terror subsides.

This is a romantic and highly colored picture of what Mr. Notch doubtless believes to be our type of book promotion. Unfortunately, Mr. Notch did not take the trouble to base that picture upon a solid foundation of carefully investigated facts. Instead, he has been guilty of some "panicking" on his own account and has been carried away by the temptation to over-simplify and over-dramatize.

Would that his picture were true! How simple it would then be to bring out the brass band and make *every* book a sure-fire best seller of the first magnitude.

If Mr. Notch had preferred to take a calm, critical, scientific attitude in his analysis of popular taste, he would have ascertained advance sales and the initial advertising appropriations on the books he singles out for attention. It may surprise him to learn that "The Story of Philosophy," which has sold 223,692 copies at $5.00 and is now selling several hundred thousand more at $1.00, had an advance sale of 798 copies. "Trader Horn," which has sold 159,165 copies to date at $4.00 and many more at $1.00, had an advance sale of 3,049 copies.

I mention these figures only to make clear that if the publishers had possessed any simple formula or technique for "staging the picture" and "panicking the mob," they certainly would have printed bigger first editions and rolled up larger advance sales, and thus effected enormous savings in production and distribution.

In any nation-wide popular clamor for a real best seller of the first rank, there is undoubtedly a good deal of "panic," but the "panic" is largely inherent in the book itself. The publisher cannot *create* a "panic"; he can only *report* it, and, if he is lucky, to a certain extent enhance it and extend it by effective promotion.

The initial cumulative "panic" inheres in the "X-quantity" which makes a book "click"—and this in turn consists of a number of variable factors, predominantly those qualities which impel critics to praise, booksellers to recommend, celebrities to endorse, customers to approve, book buyers to applaud and "talk up" a book among their friends. Word-of-mouth advertising is of the essence.

The main point which your author overlooks is the fact that the "panic" automatically stops if the people who are "panicked" into buying the book do not like it, recommend it, and talk about it *after* they have bought it.

If the reader "looks at the first few pages and the ghastly terror subsides" the "panic" ends automatically.

These are elementary facts which every experienced publisher, bookseller, and social psychologist knows, and I emphasize them here only because your author makes naïve assumptions to the contrary. If such best sellers as "Main Street," "All Quiet On The Western Front," "If Winter Comes," "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" (to name a few at random) are analyzed, this indispensable element of reader-satisfaction will be found to underly all the other factors in the promotion campaign.

This is not simply an assumption on our part; we have analyzed these factors in great detail with respect to such best sellers as the First Cross Word Puzzle Books, "The Story of Philosophy," "Trader Horn," "Bambi," "Believe It Or Not!," "Show Girl," and "The Art of Thinking."

The "panic" for "The Story of Philosophy" was started by Professor John Dewey and by the thousands of readers who enjoyed and respected what they found in the book. The "panic" was stimulated by superlatively enthusiastic reviews by Stuart P. Sherman, Henry Hazlitt, The New York *Times*, Heywood Broun, H. L. Mencken, and hundreds of other critics and editors. It was extended still further by notable endorsements from scores of educators, university presidents, ministers, and lecturers.

All publishers, no matter how energetic or astute in their promotion, can testify to the frequent and dismal failures when they tried to "stage a panic" or "set the picture" *before* the book has demonstrated its inherent popular appeal. Mr. Notch's Anatomy of Public Preference would be much more illuminating and valuable, if he had discussed the duds and the disappointments of publishers' advertising, if he had entered Heartbreak House for the other side of the picture. However, since such data would not fit into his preconceived prejudice, he forsook paths of disinterested scientific research and simply turned aside.

Throughout Mr. Notch's argument runs the implicit assumption that Machiavellian publishers can willy nilly make a best seller by simply turning on the advertising spigot. He credits us in particular with uncanny and almost miraculous powers in this direction. I wish that he had gone into this situation much more thoroughly and had scientifically analyzed publishers' advertising. Mr. Simon and I have always prided ourselves on the fact that we have no one pat advertising formula. Each book is an adventure in itself. We have had our share of "naturals" and our share of disappointments.

If the promotion of books were as automatic and as certain as Mr. Notch seems to imply, the fascination of our calling would be greatly diminished and the present alluring unpredictability would be replaced by a dull routine of standardized "panic." We have never made any secret of our disappointments and failures. In our Inner Sanctum column and our other advertising we have frequently discussed them with the utmost frankness, even boasting occasionally of "candor-to-the-point-of-indiscretion." Our sales figures are always specific and accurate and it is a definite policy of ours to enlist the terrific force of understatement. We never speak glibly of large printings and new editions in round numbers, but give the actual facts about our worst-sellers as well as best-sellers.

Mr. Notch reveals his animus by stating that publishers have forsaken, in the new type of book promotion, "the crude appeal of praise, however dishonestly used." Now this statement is simply inaccurate and ridiculous. We frequently and persistently use the appeal of praise, and we use it honestly. The files and records on our campaigns for "The Art of Thinking," "Bambi," "The Story of Philosophy," "Twelve against the Gods," and other outstanding best-sellers prove this. We try not to use the appeal crudely, but we insist on using it honestly—that is, we never garble or distort a critic's comment, taking a few quotable plums from a context of different connotation. Praise by critics and notables together with the enthusiasm of actual readers constitutes the backbone of any effective promotion.

I am not attempting to answer "King Mob" as a whole, but the parts to which I have already referred clearly indicate that its picture of publishing technique is oversimplified, distorted, and unwarranted. In places, the author is so naïve as to be almost amusing. Even assuming that all he said were true, it would still give only a one-sided picture of modern publishing practice.

I think Mr. Notch would find some amazing surprises and some illuminating data if he stopped "panicking" himself into melodramatic and sensational statements and quietly examined publishers' catalogues, sales figures, and advertising records. If he is seriously interested in such a fact-finding research, we shall be delighted to place all our material at his disposal.

I have purposely omitted detailed discussion of those of our books which were selected by the Book-of-the-Month Club, as they may be said to be in a special category with an artificial sales stimulation at the outset. This, however, applies to only two of our publications—"Bambi" and "The Cradle of the Deep." In Mr. Notch's discussion of the Book-of-the-Month Club, I detect the persistent and familiar implication that such agencies are standardizing and regimenting popular taste in books. The charge has frequently been made that the book clubs are concentrating critical and book buying attention upon a few titles, to the detriment of the general run of current literature.

A simple examination of the sales data will immediately invalidate such an assumption. Any publisher and bookseller can point to scores of recent titles which have become best sellers without a book club adoption. For ourselves, we need only point out that none of our book club selections has sold nearly as well as "The Story of Philosophy" or "The Art of Thinking," to name two outstanding examples. Conversely, there have been many book club selections which have been distinct "duds" in the bookstores. I mention these instances to point out again that Mr. Notch is frequently engaged in the old pastime of demolishing men of straw.

M. LINCOLN SCHUSTER.

Housman and Hardy

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

Margaret Woodbridge in your issue of May 17 remarks on the "striking similarity" between Mr. Housman's poem No. XXVI in his "Last Poems" and Mr. Hardy's "The Division" from his "Time's Laughing Stock."

As a matter of fact the surface similarity of stanza form in these poems and their common use of an "image" of so universal a poetical employment as rain, only accentuates their actual dissimilarity, one to the other.

Here is the last stanza of Housman's poem:

I know not if it rains, my love,
In the land where you do lie;
And oh, so sound you sleep, my love,
You know no more than I.

and this of Hardy's:

But that thwart thing betwixt us twain
Which hides yet reappears
Is more than distance, Dear, or rain
And longer than the years.

The cadence, that is, the inner music of the verse; the rhythm, that outer beat which takes the ear and almost with its vibration the eye; the structure of the line, that is, the permanent poetic scaffolding; the words themselves, all these are in the two stanzas, different, "strikingly," almost to the point of antithesis.

May I mention, not what is also true that the poets have taken their words from alien groups but merely this—the use by Housman of monosyllables as against Hardy's polysyllabic "reappears," etc., etc.

And that this is only indicative of an even greater under difference of cadence, rhythm, and line structure I will leave contentedly to the critical sense of any real poet—such as, well, your Mr. Benét.

K. S. ALLING.

Taking Issue with Mr. Loeb

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

Mr. Harold Loeb's amazing essay in your issue of May 17th, "America Indicted Again," is characteristic of the self-assurance with which a majority of America's defenders dismiss all critical analysis. To them criticism is "abuse" which, however, gives the "victims" of the critics "pleasure as well as some slight benefit." For them to say that "in America the battle of life is confused," seems sufficient to dispose of the problems of that battle.

I have not read Mr. Josephson's book upon which Mr. Loeb bases his views in the guise of a review, but it does not matter. Neither did that matter much to Mr. Loeb, for after reading his review of nearly two pages, one has but an indistinct idea of the book itself. What mattered to Mr. Loeb were his opinions, and Mr. Josephson's "Portrait of the Artist as American" was a convenient vehicle.

Let us now analyze some of Mr. Loeb's own answers. "Obviously the lot of those who struggle against a trend is not easy." But is that all that can be said in defense of the trend itself? "Liberty is freedom of choice," implying that one may or may not accept his opinions and his information from the radio, the movies, the advertising, the press. What if the weight of the mass impels one to a given choice? "No force has been applied. Modern man has chosen to discard several antique graces, good manners and so forth. He finds them boring." Of course. No policeman has applied force. I do not know Mr. Loeb's circumstances, but it is probable that his Buick which, he says, "responds to a caress," is owned by him less for its need and more because his neighbors also own cars. Why graceful living bores the modern man? Isn't it because the machine has stimulated his avarice, speeded up his life, and made his mind more alert to material opportunities? Charm and grace then become aliens, admired by some at a distance, ridiculed by others.

"American inventions have gradually destroyed formal dances, church services, carnivals, and other collective social activities. Jazz dancing, motor cars, radios, concentrated petting, and so forth are enjoyed by individuals, couples, and small groups. Collective play has been nearly ruled out of the modern scene." All this is true, but Mr. Loeb fondly recites these facts to prove that American individuality still exists! "Only at the anachronistic colleges and churches," he says, "does a collective spirit feebly survive."

At this point Mr. Loeb says that enough examples have been cited. I think so too.

ADA S. GREGORIUS.

More on Mr. Loeb

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

Permit me to shout one gleeful "Whoop!" after reading Harold Loeb's review of Josephson's book, the title of which I have already forgotten.

That little essay by Loeb is the best bit of debunking I've read in a long while, and ought to—though it won't—put a silencer on the dear distressed souls who run around, amidst the marvels of the most magical age the world has known, telling us how terrible everything is.

SHAEMAS O'SHEEL
Brooklyn, N. Y.

In Honor of Mr. Royster

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

The editors of a proposed volume of studies in honor of the late James Finch Royster being sponsored by an association of Mr. Royster's students would like to communicate with those of Mr. Royster's students who have not been informed of the project. Communications should be addressed to Professor Louis B. Wright, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

RAYMOND ADAMS
University of North Carolina.

D. H. Lawrence

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

The notes of "A Rapid Reader" in your issue of Saturday, March 22, included a passing and personal reference to D. H. Lawrence which was significant only of your contributor's unhappy state of mind. Critics of eminence have proposed and maintained that Lawrence was a genius who wrote novels, plays, poetry, books of travel, text-books of history, and essays in criticism; and excelled as a translator from the Russian and Italian.

TERENCE HOLLIDAY.
New York.

Carpenter Letters

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

The literary executors of the late Edward Carpenter have in preparation a memorial volume and I have been asked to prepare the chapter on Walt Whitman and Carpenter's other American literary friends. I will be grateful to holders of letters from Carpenter for copies of the same; and as the letters from the English disciple of the Good Gray poet are so widely scattered, perhaps owners of such letters to Whitman would permit me to have copies.

WILL S. MONROE.
Couching Lion Farm, Waterbury, Vt.

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, 2 Bramerton St., Chelsea S.W.3, London, England.

Susan McCormick, U. S. 38, Bronx, says: "I am making an historical study of magazines published in secondary schools. At present, I am searching for any early issues before 1890. After that date for first issues. I shall be grateful for information as to where these magazines are to be found at present. Articles, books, or reports concerning these magazines are of interest to me also."

Readers will save time by writing directly to Miss McCormick.

A LITTLE book has just been added to those needed by a recent inquirer: "Parliamentary Law," by Edith Theall Chafee (Crowell), is of pocket size, and so clear and easy to use that it is really a help to the inexperienced. I wish someone would ask me about cook books, for I have just had two on one day and both noble. "Two-hundred Years of Charleston Cooking," by Blanche Rhett, Lettie Gay, and Helen Woodward (Cape & Smith) is fine: I set about building a sweet potato pie within an hour. "The Cape Cod Cook Book," by Suzanne Cary Gruver (Little, Brown), would make an exiled New Englander weep bitter tears; it has all the old indispensables, of which I especially recommend clam-cakes, these being not so well known as they deserve. The seeker after strange and succulent recipes will find several in—of all places—the novel, "Down in the Valley," by H. W. Freeman (Holt), the recent novel by the author of "Joseph and his Brethren." For instance, there is pudding made of fresh garden marigolds.

Also I could have added to the list of Emily Dickinson recent books "Portrait of the Artist as American," by Matthew Josephson (Harcourt, Brace) in which a section is devoted to her. One is forthcoming, too, from Genevieve Taggard. The Emily Dickinson bibliography published by the Hampshire Bookshop, Northampton, Mass., in an edition of 500 copies, has just reached me: it is an exquisite little work.

CLYDE FURST, of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, sends me "as a small token of appreciation of the Guide," the following pages which had to be taken from his review of the new edition of Trollope, in *The Saturday Review of Literature*, May 3:—

"The revival of interest in Trollope is marked by four biographical and critical volumes. T. H. S. Escott's 'Anthony Trollope, His Public Services, Private Friends, and Literary Originals,' 1913, included personal remembrances of Trollope by intimate friends and younger contemporaries like Mr. Escott himself, numerous additions to the detail of the Autobiography, carefully documented discussions of the most important books, a bibliography of first editions and of articles about Trollope, and, throughout, discriminating criticism, concluding: 'At each successive stage of the novelist's course, Trollope . . . gained in breadth and depth of outlook upon life, in power and certainty of character analysis, as well as in a dramatic perception of the potential tragedies belonging to everyday existence.' Spencer Van Bokkelen Nichols's 'The Significance of Anthony Trollope,' 1925, privately printed but deserving a wider circulation, contains the author's map of Barsetshire produced in color with vignettes by George F. Muendel, a gazetteer of important places described in Trollope's own words, a classification of the novels into ten groups which are now generally accepted, a documented statement of the increased demand for Trollope's work, and a rich appreciation which ventures to conclude 'In literature the two great Victorians were Thackeray and Dickens, but greater than these was Anthony Trollope.' Michael Sadleir's 'Anthony Trollope, a Commentary,' 1927, discusses Trollope as a mid-Victorian in his moral thoughtfulness and high sense of duty, gives eighty pages of information, mostly new, concerning Trollope's mother; adds sundry facts from Trollope's gradually recovered correspondence and from printed reminiscences; prints Trollope's map of Barsetshire, together with those of Father Knox and Mr. Nichols; reviews and quotes other reviews of the books; reminds us that Trollope as an editor discovered Austin Dobson and Olive Schreiner; provides careful calendars of events, bibliographies, and classifications; and, in general, thoroughly reaps and gleans his field. Hugh Walpole's 'Anthony Trollope,' in the English Men of Letters Series, 1928, depends upon his predecessors for biographical facts, but gives a rapid survey of Trollope's writing from the point of view of a practicing novelist. Mr. Walpole considers Lucy Robarts "the most adorable Cinderella in fiction," Hopkins in the 'Small House at Allington,' 'one of the best gardeners in fiction, praises 'Ayala's Angel,' 1881, as 'possibly the most unjustly neglected of all the Trollope novels,' adds 'in the Barsetshire series of novels Trollope achieved an especial success allowed to very few novelists in any country at any time—he created a world,' and concludes 'there has never been an English novelist who produced so many novels on an equally fine level as did Trollope.'"

Mr. Furst sent it for my files, but I have Trollope enthusiasts in mind who would not wish me to keep it there.

C. M. W., St. Paul, Minn., asks for "a group of books on the history of the religions, something readable and not too difficult to follow."

TO many readers this calls to mind Lewis Browne's "This Believing World" (Macmillan), a rapid sketch of the religious impulse and the shapes it has taken in the course of history, a useful work for one who has thought of religion only in terms of his own faith, if he will bear in mind that the opening part is bound to be largely inference. The author reminds his readers of this, but his style is so convincing they may forget. Somewhere just beyond this book runs the line dividing useful "popular" histories of religion from mere labor-saving devices that have brought "outlines" down to "stories" and "hours" in the interests of predigestion; well over this line is the superficial "Story of Religion" of C. F. Potter (Simon & Schuster). A number of excellent textbooks prepared for theological students are also available for home study or general reading: R. E. Hume's "The World's Living Religions" (Scribner) is one of the smallest of these, packing a great deal of information into easily accessible paragraphs. George A. Barton's "Religions of the World" (University of Chicago Press) is a lucid, concise textbook for college classes in comparative religion, widely used; another is T. H. Robinson's "Outline Introduction to the History of Religions" (Oxford University Press) "Andrew Menzies's "History of Religions" (Scribner) is a sketch of primitive beliefs and of the great systems. E. W. Hopkins's "History of Religions" (Macmillan) condenses a vast amount of information into one volume for students. The range of George Foot Moore's "History of Religions" (Scribner, 2 vols) is wider and its treatment scholarly. The student has also C. H. Toy's "Introduction to the History of Religions" (Harvard University Press), E. W. Hopkins's "Origin and Evolution of Religion" (Yale University Press), and Churchward "Origin and Evolution of Religions" (Dutton)—incidentally, these four are more expensive, most of those on the list above costing no more than novels.

It is, however, with the "reading histories" that this inquirer is no doubt more concerned. Of these the most widely known and read is Salomon Reinach's "Orpheus," long out of print and now just brought back by Liveright in a revised and enlarged edition; this is a review by an expert, for the general reader, of religions from early myths to present creeds, with special reference to Judaism and Christianity. For many years James Freeman Clarke's "Ten Great Religions" (Houghton Mifflin, 2 vols.) has induced a sweet reasonableness in the attitude of the Christian reader to other historic faiths. Of late years Edward Carpenter's "Pagan and Christian Creeds" (Harcourt, Brace) has been enthusiastically received; it is a study of the evolution of religious rites and ceremonies. I cannot come so near to Frazer's "Golden Bough" without noting the one-volume condensation of this great work (Macmillan), but it is scarcely within the intention of this inquirer. Edmund D. Soper's "Religions of Mankind" (Abingdon) describes them from Egypt to Christianity. "The World's Great Religions and the Religion of the Future," by Alfred W. Martin (Appleton), has been lately much read; Bertram Windle's "Religions Past and Present" (Century) is a popular account of beliefs, superstitions, and racial morals; Father Martindale's "Religions of the World" is one of the volumes of Benn's sixpenny library, which does so well by so large an audience in England and is now reaching us here.

THE DUTTON PRIZE BOOK FOR JUNE

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By Kathleen Coyle

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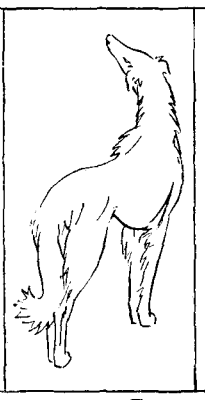

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The New Books

Fiction

(*Continued from page* 1147)

nique, but by comparison with the second it is seen to be little more.

Such an interest in technical problems as Mr. Paul's is a great gift especially when, as with him, it is accompanied by a constantly increasing feeling for character. "Imperturbe" was primarily a book of mood; "Low Run Tide" and "Lava Rock," of character; "The Amazon," of character; and each marks an advance over its predecessor.

Juvenile

(*The Children's Bookshop appears on page* 1146)

PLAYING THE GAME. Edited by SARAH MCLEAN MULLEN and MURIEL SIMPSON LANZ. Century. 1930. $1.50.

Twenty stories have been selected from *St. Nicholas* by these ladies in the hope of making the sports tale into a Splendid Influence. And no pains, we must say, have been spared. Where the sacrifice hits or the last minute victories fail to "function in character education" obviously enough, questions before and after taking reveal the ideal. These "Reading Comprehension Tests" (which pretty well give the story away before it is read) take one back to Rollo's babyhood. While, after the reading, no straw of moral value is left ungleaned. The stories chosen are naturally of the softer sort, with Joseph B. Ames's "Ramsey from Montana" and Brewer Corcoran's "The Hippo and the Humming-bird" above the average in fibre. We know of no more refined way of sterilizing creative interest than this, and believe that one page of wicked Stalky, unexplained, and even half understood, is worth this entire book.

GLEAMING RAILS. By GRAHAM M. DEAN. Appleton. 1930. $2.

As the blurb says, "Towhead soon proves his ability to handle any situation" which, as soon as found out, deprives the story of much interest or any value. Young Clancy would have been more likable if less competent in his railroading. He crawls across a trestle and saves an express, and it is good work. He prevents a "silk special" from crashing, and you forgive the boy. But when he outwits a bandit, breaks up a strike, and performs other miracles, you throw the book away. For, in spite of the interesting slants on his job, you know he isn't human.

Philosophy

PLEASURE AND INSTINCT. A Study in the Psychology of Human Action. By A. H. BURLTON ALLEN. Harcourt, Brace. 1930.

It's a genial slander, but a libel none the less, that maintains that a psychologist (in older days a philosopher) gives a wise man's answer to questions that only a fool would ask. What is truth? is in all truth a wise man's question; and What is pleasure? equally so, with more prospect of satisfaction in answering it. It is both wisely asked and satisfactorily answered in this well-knit study by Mr. Allen. The intellectualist phase of psychology has receded; yet knowledge and the nature of the intellectual life must ever claim close attention. But with the shift of psychology toward behavior and personality, the emotions have come to their own. So we explore with a richer understanding the sources of our psychic pulsation.

Pleasure starts at the organic level of functioning, finds its enrichment in the sensory endowment, which in turn as it moves away from use to luxury, develops the life esthetic. In another evolution the organic expands in the channels of the instincts, again in an ascending hierarchy from the instincts of nutrition, to reproduction, to the impulse to knowledge, to power, to the social and the altruistic field. Urges mature desires, and these, set in a plan, establish a scale of values, paralleling in the capacities for happiness the ranges of personality in the drama of life.

Such is the setting of the pleasure-scale in which we live and move and have our varied being. The psychologist focuses upon the array of data revealed by experiment and self-observation higher-powered lenses than would suit the field-glasses of the dramatic gazer upon the human scene. He finds mystery in the simple, speaks of unpleasure rather than pain, invents theories to bring in one formulation the variety of experiences and their expression, of which the rich facial repertory of man is so eloquent an index.

As civilization matures, we grow in feeling even more significantly than in thinking. The story of man is the record of the shifting and the evolution of his pleasure-fields. We should still be crude savages if we were limited to the primitive varieties of pleasure and unpleasure. Against this background every clarification of the processes of body and mind that supply the endowment for this significant human story, itself becomes significant. The volume of Mr. Allen is a serviceable guide to emotional psychology; it is critical, free from the fallacy of easy solutions, shows appreciation for the problems and their intricate relations.

Poetry

THE COLLECTED POEMS OF STEPHEN CRANE. Knopf. 1930. $2.50.

It is part of the irony of Stephen Crane's career that he should continue to be known chiefly as the author of "The Red Badge of Courage." His subsequent work was richer in every way: "The Open Boat" and "The Monster" have the power of the *tour de force* Crane wrote at twenty-three, but it is a power disciplined, a force *formed*.

This form-making impulse—so little appreciated by Crane's contemporary appraisers—is most apparent in the "free verse" to which Crane turned and, in spite of public apathy, returned. "War Is Kind" and "The Black Riders" presented a kind of poetry which must have tasted wrily on the sweets-craving palates of the 'nineties. Here, twenty years before the Imagists persuaded skeptics that a pattern could be achieved through forms less regular than sonnets, Crane put the part of himself he could not trust to prose. Bitter these records are; the key is usually as mordant as:

In the desert
I saw a creature, naked, bestial,
Who, squatting on the ground,
Held his heart in his hands,
And ate of it.
I said, "Is it good, friend?"
"It is bitter—bitter," he answered.
"But I like it
Because it is bitter,
And because it is my heart."

Not all of the poems are as clenched as this; some are bright extensions of anger, some are violent frustrations, some mere cries of a contemptuous spirit. But there is nothing contemptible in the least of them. Acidulous and brilliant, unappreciated in his time, these elliptical concisions have not yet received their due from a generation which employs their very technique. It was forty years before Emily Dickinson won her rightful audience and a quarter of a century before a publisher ventured a "Complete Works" of Stephen Crane. It is a cause for gratification that the same publisher has also risked the first complete—and popularly priced—collection of Crane's concisely intimate poetry.

Travel

SHAMBHALA. By NICHOLAS ROERICH. Stokes. 1930. $2.50.

Mr. Roerich, who may aspire to the title of universal genius (since he does almost everything with distinction), is nevertheless better known as a painter than in any other capacity. His Museum and Art Center in New York has received a good deal of attention and his lectures and writings still more. But it is as the painter of Diaghileff's settings for the "Prince Igor" ballet that most people will remember him. The steppes of Central Asia, which gave him his inspiration then, serve now as the field of his new book, "Shambhala." It is in the main an account of his travels in that region, which were long, arduous, and often far off even the most unbeaten tracks. The account is a very complete expression of the author's unusual personality, in which much experience and knowledge is used to support a vague tendency to philosophize and prophesy after the manner of the founders of all cults, ancient and modern, in order to prove the righteousness of his doctrine. To the numerous disciples who hang on the Master's every word there is no doubt that "Shambhala" will seem an extremely important document, but to most westerners, firmly anchored to the earth, it will all seem as distant as the Himalayas. Mr. Roerich's style is excessively grand at times, and one rather wonders in what language he originally wrote the book; yet at his best, like all prophets, he convinces, in spite of reason. To undergo to the fullest extent a test of his power it is necessary to hear him in person, since his force is naturally somewhat diminished on the printed page.

IN QUEST OF THE SUN. By *Alvin Gerbault.* Doubleday, Doran. $2.50 net.

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A Model Bibliography

A BALZAC BIBLIOGRAPHY. By WILLIAM HOBART ROYCE. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1929. $5.

Reviewed by CHRISTIAN GAUSS

"THE interest of the American university professor in scholarship is professional rather than profound." It was in these terms that a distinguished European recently summed up his criticism of our system of higher education. He was challenged rather fiercely by a group of my colleagues but held his ground and retired with the honors of war. We talk, he said, in the colleges glibly, often fanatically, about research in the humanities but our interest is factitious, a sort of defense reaction, and he offered as proof the fact that we have never created in our country any such body of non-professional scholars as exists in England or France or Germany. The best we could do was to create the book collector. This, he insisted, was only an intermediate step since success in this field depended not so much upon a love or knowledge of books as upon a deft manipulation of that generally accepted measure of American success, the dollar. There may be something to his indictment. For this reason it is a pleasure to salute the appearance of so excellent a work as "A Balzac Bibliography," written by William H. Royce who has never been tarred by the academic stick and who is in the best and highest sense an amateur.

There are, however, other excellent and incontrovertible reasons why every student of French literature should be gratified by the appearance of this volume. In the development of, perhaps in our over-emphasis upon, the historical method of approach to all problems we have created the necessity for what in our professional jargon we call "spade work." In attacking any important problem in literature or history, the modern scholar must draw upon the work of previous students who have provided the tools and prepared the ground. The most valuable of all such tools is, of course, a careful bibliography of his subject. For years students of Balzac have been praying for this. Mr. Royce has answered their prayers.

Mr. Royce is not a university professor. He does not even pretend to be a student of French literature. He is simply and *bonnement*, as the Frenchman would say, a lover of Balzac. This volume, therefore, represents the patient, modest, and devoted labor of thirty years. It is, however, in accuracy, completeness, and arrangement so nearly a model that we who in greater or less degree count ourselves professionals are forced to regard it with humility.

Its importance to all libraries, to all students of Balzac, is such, and its history so unique, that perhaps I may be pardoned a personal confession. When a number of years ago I learned that an amateur bookman in New York was preparing a compendium of all Balzac items, I am afraid I smiled indulgently. The task had appeared so vast that it had discouraged professionals. If there is one nineteenth century literary figure whose influence has permeated Europe it is the author of "The Human Comedy." It is impossible to write the history of the novel in any country without crossing his path and a proper bibliography would therefore necessarily lead to patient, systematic search through not only French but Russian, German, Italian, Spanish, Scandinavian, English, and American and other sources. I had dabbled in only one small corner of Balzac bibliography which had to do with one of the ramifications of his influence in German literature, a field in which Mr. Royce disclaimed any special competence. I felt it would be wise and merciful to discourage him in his Herculean task or at least to convince him that he must restrict his range. I sought out a German compendium which would give particularly all German items on the novelist that had appeared in a given year. It was a fairly long list and though Mr. Royce had never used that particular short cut to bibliography, to my great astonishment he had not only picked up these items in other sources but in two instances offered corrections upon this standard work. I gave up my attempt to convert this dogged investigator to professional methods and from that time to this have waited hopefully for the appearance of his work.

Mr. Royce graciously acknowledges the assistance he has received from American professors who are authorities in this field, like Walter Scott Hastings of Princeton and particularly E. Preston Dargan of Chicago, and the latter has no doubt given much assistance in sifting and arranging this mountain of material as well as in providing a most interesting introduction. I am, however, violating no confidence when I recall that Professor Dargan also was once hesitant. He was afraid the Swedish items might have been less thoroughly combed and engaged a Swedish student to make a survey. Many long hours of well-directed search disclosed only one item not previously garnered. It is for this reason that this volume which is to be supplemented by a second, contains ten times as much systematized material as any previous bibliographical aid to Balzac study, and for workers in this field may well be rated as indispensable.

An Indian Captivity

NARRATIVE OF THE CAPTIVITY AND RESTORATION OF MRS. MARY ROWLANDSON. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1930. $1.25.

Reviewed by MARY AUSTIN

"THE Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson," republished in reference to the Tercentenary of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, is one of those "authentic and graphic contemporary delineations" which should never be allowed to die out of American literature. Not altogether because it was among the earliest books published in its locality, being first issued in 1682, but because it is less revealing, as the introduction declares, of the "manners and customs of the primitive children of the soil," than it is of the mind and manners of our ancestors who wrested it from them. As the forerunner of a long line of narratives of Indian captivities among vanished tribes, it disappoints as they all do in the paucity of genuine information on tribal manners and customs, and constitutes itself one long shudder of the mingled terror and contempt in which the Indians were held by the English settlers.

For terror there was excuse enough. The account of the Indian raid with which the narrative opens, is scarcely surpassed in literature for scriptural simplicity and succinctness. "On the tenth of February, 1675, came the Indians in great numbers upon Lancaster. Their first coming was about sun-rising. Hearing the noise of guns, we looked out. . . ." Equally explicit the account of shootings and knockings in the head. Mrs. Rowlandson and the young child she carried were both wounded. For days she had to watch it suffer and die for want of the commonest necessities. Two of her children were carried captive out of her sight, and on the rare occasions when she was able to see and talk with them during the months of captivity she was unable to afford them any alleviation. During that time she suffered the extremes of cold and hunger and rudeness, but no other offense. In these narratives of captivity among American Indians the women were remarkably free from the sort of violence that is immemorially offered to women among Christian tribes at war. Mrs. Rowlandson met and talked with King Philip and was treated courteously by him. She was the recipient, as she frequently records, of kindness, such as food and shelter, from other Indians, when the one she was constrained to regard as her master, neglected her.

One of the tribe presented her with a Bible, which became her chief spiritual support. She met "praying Indians," that

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being the term applied to tribesmen who had been brought under missionary influence and adopted at least one Christian practice. But nowhere is the shell of horror and contempt pierced by any Christian perception of humanity in her captors. Outrageous, hellish, barbarous, are the terms she has for them; utterly mindless of what Indians themselves often suffered at the hands of White men. The death of her Indian Mistress's child makes "more room" in the hut, and a good mess of food; to such un-Christian extremities does hunger reduce us. She records with gusto the hanging of Indian guilty of the atrocities of war against the Whites. And every other paragraph of her account instances a verse from the Bible and a full account of her own religious reaction to it. So pronounced at every turn is this emphasis on the conventional Christian reaction, that in the preface to the second edition of 1682, it is confidently stated that "no Friend of Divine Providence" would regret the time spent in its perusal. Mrs. Rowlandson was herself the wife of a Christian minister, but out of her experience she quite evidently drew, no hint of anything which might have led to the composition of the difficulties between Indians and Whites, such as might have prevented, or at least mitigated mutual atrocities. Indeed the only vivid and recognizably true picture of the wild tribes she draws, is one in which she perforce participated, the shortage of food incident on the rapid movement of warfare, and the animal-like ways of satisfying the hunger to which they were all reduced. Nothing is learned of their religion; very little, and that purely incidental, of their domestic manners. One domestic manner of her own time Mrs. Rowlandson unwittingly preserves for us, which is that ministers' wives in 1682 might easily be addicted to the use of smoking tobacco.

One makes, in reading, all allowance for difference in the fashions of words, and the thoughts permitted to be so expressed. The vocabulary of Puritanism—being so largely derived from the Old Testament—was probably better supplied with words of dolor and dread than any other American vocabulary since. Nor does one depend entirely on the quality of Puritanism for interpretations, since at the very time Mrs. Rowlandson was wandering captive in the wilds of New England, the Catholic Colonists in the Southwest were undergoing complete rout at the hands of revolting Indians, for precisely the unendurable Christian arrogance and unfairness that outraged the Indians of Massachusetts Bay Colony. So that one has to fall back on the common quality of the Christianity of that time to account for the reaction of the modern reader, including as it does *both* Christian and Savage. Anything more like the Indian dependence on his fetish than Mrs. Rowlandson's on her sacred book, cannot be imagined.

If anything the minister's wife is less susceptible to promptings of intelligence, and genuine humanity than an Indian would be in like circumstances. Terror and contempt are they perhaps twin offspring of dogmatic religions? In "The Captivity and Restoration of Mary Rowlandson," may not the American gather the roots of all he likes least in today's report of existing racial conflicts? At least one gathers that the teachings of the gentle Jesus had very little part in the Christianity of our forefathers. In the whole passage of what Mrs. Rowlandson regards as a profound spiritual experience there is no mention of Christ, and of the sixty-one Scriptural references, only three are from the New Testament.

The drawings of Rabinedranath Tagore were recently on exhibition in England. Apropos of them the *Manchester Guardian* says: "Dr. Tagore, who began this work only two or three years ago, has had no technical instruction in drawing, and he seems to have begun to make pictures very much in the way a boy begins when he makes a blot and enlarges it into a pattern; in fact, the earliest drawings were simply developments of a series of erasures made in his ink manuscripts.

"Colored inks are used for all the drawings, and often a great depth of color has been obtained by mixing these or imposing one upon another. All through the drawings done in 1928 and 1929 the spontaneous element remains. They are grotesques rather than drawings from nature.

"Some of the designs are very curious. One was evolved from Tagore's own signature; another started in floral form and then developed wings and feet, so that the finished drawing is half bird and half flower; some take the form of landscapes and many of faces and human figures. There is a fine design in color of two ducks, and a group of striking drawings have an animal *motif*—one suggesting an elephant and another a crocodile.

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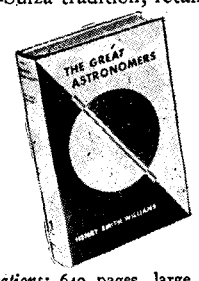

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The Great Astronomers by HENRY SMITH WILLIAMS presents Star Gazing via the Star Gazers themselves. After an introduction for the timid reader, a reassuring word of warning, so to speak —*H. S. W.* begins with the astrologers and the forerunners of ERATOSTHENES, and carries his readers with the aid of illustrations and maps through the lives and achievements of PTOLEMY, HIPPARCHUS, ALHAZEN, COPERNICUS, and on through twenty centuries, to SHAPLEY, EDDINGTON and JEANS. (*The Inner Sanctum* regrets to report that the book was in page proofs before they finally decided to call the new planet *Pluto*.)

NEWS!

Two weeks ago today WILL DURANT returned on the *Franconia* from a trip around the world. High-spot was India. . . . *The Hound of Florence* by FELIX SALTEN (author of *Bambi*) is just published—a novel, illustrated by *The Inner Sanctum's* favorite artist, KURT WIESE. . . . *Crucibles* (which received *The Francis Bacon Award for the Humanizing of Knowledge*) by BERNARD JAFFE is published today. . . . Arrangements are being made for an international Contract Bridge Match between *Austria* and *America*. SIDNEY LENZ (whose new dollar book is among the best sellers) will captain the American team. *The Inner Sanctum* will be glad to send free a summary of his Contract Bidding system to anyone who wants to know how it works. . . . A book of GEORGE GERSHWIN's songs (including piano arrangements as they are actually played by G. G. himself) is scheduled for October. . . . *Humanism* (the religion, not the literary controversy) by CHARLES FRANCIS POTTER is being absorbed in amazingly large quantities by the local book emporia.

To return once more to dollar fiction: For years *The Inner Sanctum* has believed it would be an interesting experiment to make. The experiment will begin (as far as our fiction is concerned) in about a month. Whether it will succeed or not depends on two factors:

1. Whether the public would like the novels even at $2.50. (Which we believe.)
2. Whether the public will like them well enough at a dollar to buy about four times as many at the lower price. (Which remains to be seen.)

Meanwhile, *The Inner Sanctum* offers an autographed copy of *Believe It Or Not* to the first person who asks for (and succeeds in buying) a folio Shakespeare at *Liggett's* or a box of aspirin at *Brentano's*.

—ESSANDESS.

Pulitzer Prize Novel

Laughing Boy

by Oliver La Farge

100,000 Copies *$2.50*

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

THE PHOENIX NEST

PERCY SHOSTAC has written a novel in verse called "Fourteenth Street," which Simon and Schuster have published. Some years ago *Roscoe Brink* wrote a novel in verse called "Down the River." Otherwise there is nothing whatever in common between the two books. Shostac's story is of a Jew who fell in love with a Gentile. In fact Shostac writes of himself so autobiographically that perforce one is led to imagine he is telling his own story. Whether this is actually so or not he has succeeded in making it extremely poignant and the honesty of the work is unusual. You will read the book for the story. The fact of the free verse won't matter. The book communicates reality. Such stories are as old as the hills. Perhaps. But every time they are as genuinely felt as this one they are fresh and new. . . .

Gilbert Seldes has done a good job with his translation of *Aristophanes's* "Lysistrata," which Farrar & Rinehart have just published. We particularly like the scene between Myrrhina and Kinesias near the end of the book. Which reminds us that tonight, at last, we go to "The Green Pastures" for the first time, the only other play in the city we wish to see, with the exception of *Phil Barry's* "Hotel Universe." . . .

Transition, the international quarterly for creative experiment, has announced its indefinite suspension. It was founded in 1927 and appeared for a year as a monthly magazine, edited by *Eugene Jolas* and *Elliott Paul*. In the spring of 1928 it was continued as a quarterly under the direction of Jolas. During its three years it published the first and third parts of "Work in Progress" by *James Joyce*, and a fragment of the second part. . . .

Peter Smith, Publisher, of 347 Fifth Avenue, has brought out a one volume edition of "Pelle the Conqueror" by *Martin Anderson Nexö*. The price is three-fifty and all four volumes are included in this omnibus work. Originally the book was published in four volumes at $2.50 each, aggregating ten dollars. Mr. Smith's telephone is Caledonia 0047. . . .

We thank *F. M. Schultz* of Arundale Farm, North East, Pa., for a recent most kind and complimentary letter. Hereafter we shall try to mention the prices of books to which we refer. We might begin by saying that Percy Shostoc's book is two dollars and a half and "Lysistrata" two dollars. . . .

The latest novels by *H. G. Wells* and by *Kathleen Norris*, which have just arrived from Doubleday, Doran, are in contradistinction, priced at a dollar. Their titles are "The Autocracy of Mr. Parham" and "Margaret Yorke." . . .

Mr. Schultz speaks of the "fat, sweet, blue and red grapes" of his part of Pennsylvania and joins us in our love of luscious things to drink. It seems, also, that we read the same books when we were both young. . . .

The other day *Cunninghame Graham* was almost killed while riding through the streets of Tangier. His horse slipped and fell, nearly crushing the rider. Cunninghame Graham has spent most of his life either in writing or riding, as you probably know. His latest book to appear in this country is "Mogreb-el-Acksa, A Journey to Morocco." And at this writing we haven't been able to find out its price. . . .

Christopher Morley has kindly turned over to us a sonnet sent him by *Harold Wentworth*, and we take great pleasure in printing it here:

COME, LET US MEDITATE UPON THE DUCK

(For Morris Bishop)

Come, let us meditate upon the duck,
Lamellirostral bird that sings no song,
Content to paddle on ponds his whole life long,
Condemned to hunt submerged, his food in muck.
Mallards and muscovies, with quack and cluck,
Lightly, happily floating, do no wrong,
Yet when the mighty hunter comes along
Flee from his bird shot, startled, terror-struck.
Speed they to shelter, flap to the friendly sedges
All but the luckless, left to a quarry's fate,
Who fall upon the wave in agony.
Triumphantly the mighty hunter wedges
His prey, with crimson tarsi scutellate,
Into his bag. Alas, Anatidae!

Masefield's "The Wanderer," the biography of a sailing ship, is to be serialized in the *Cosmopolitan Magazine*. As a courteous gesture, in response to being appointed poet laureate, Masefield will have distributed to the Royal Family ten copies of the book representing the height of the bookmaker's art. King George, Queen Mary, the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, Princess Mary, and others will each receive one. . . .

Dorothy Parker's first book of fiction, "Laments for the Living," is being published by the Viking Press. It contains thirteen stories. It is, to put it mildly, a book worth keeping. And its implications concerning the human race are just about as terrible as any we have listened to for some time. It is the complete Parker, from the awful vignette of two infernal bores in "The Mantle of Whistler" to "A Telephone Call," which is the story we like least in the volume. For "New York to Detroit" is so very much better on the same theme. "Big Blonde" and "Mr. Durant" are masterpieces, and we always will cherish in our heart "You were Perfectly fine." It describes a—may we say psychological? No?—state with which we are, unfortunately, only too familiar. We always grab a new book by Dorothy Parker and devour it immediately. This is no exception. She has the most marvelous memory for the locutions of the common people. . . .

Next month Macmillan will publish the biography of *D. L. Moody*, the Evangelist, by his son, *Dr. William Revell Moody*, the first complete and authentic account of the life and work of the great Evangelist, containing many hitherto unpublished letters. Almost innumerable times, accompanied by *Ira D. Sankey*, D. L. Moody addressed audiences aggregating over twenty million people. The hymnals, Sacred Songs, and Solos, have sold altogether over seventy million copies. . . .

It seems there's a rising tide of Backgammon in this country. Would you believe it! Henry Holt and Company have gone into another printing of *Grosvenor Nicholas's* "Modern Backgammon" . . .

In the fall *Alfred Kreymborg* will issue through Coward-McCann an anthology, "Lyric America," not only a companion volume to his Outline of American Poetry, "Our Singing Strength," but an independent volume as well. He has tried to bring between covers the most comprehensive American collection ever undertaken. His range is the last three hundred years, 1630 to 1930. Price five dollars. . . .

Longmans, Green tell us that *S. Fowler Wright* has now turned to a new field. In "Elfwin," which they will publish in September, a story is told of the Saxons versus the Vikings. Elfwin is the granddaughter of *Alfred the Great*. She is in love with Sithric, a high-spirited Danish prince. . . .

We have been looking at *Eslanda Goode Robeson's* "Paul Robeson, Negro." It is a shorter book than we imagined, but it is most interesting. Harper & Brothers publish it at $2.50. One passage that particularly absorbed us was concerning the sculpturing of the large statue of Robeson by *Antonio Salemme*, an old friend of ours. As a human being we have always admired Robeson intensely. There is more solid character to him than to most of the men we know, and no one is gladder of his most recent crowning success on the stage, in the London production of "Othello." . . .

Oliver Elton's "C. E. Montague" is the account of another fine person, whose personality made *The Manchester Guardian* one of the world's great liberal papers. A well-rounded life of a noted author and journalist. Quite a large section of the book is concerned with Montague's service during the Great War. . . .

THE PHOENICIAN.

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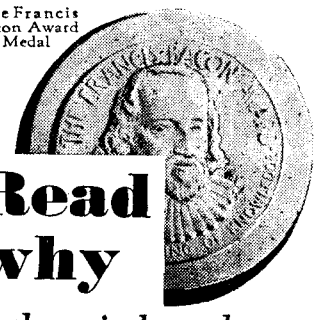

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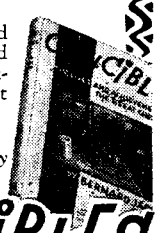

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